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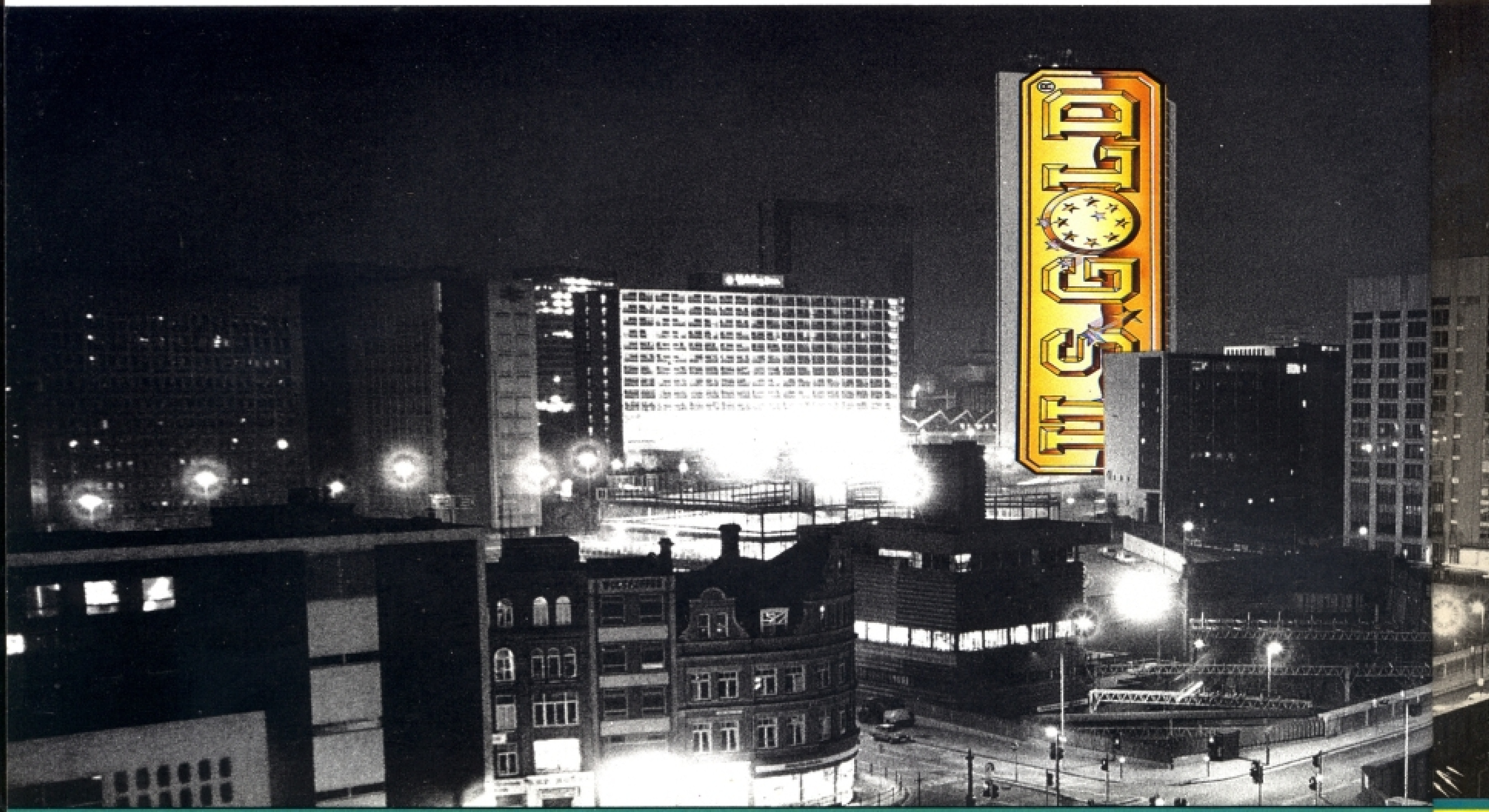
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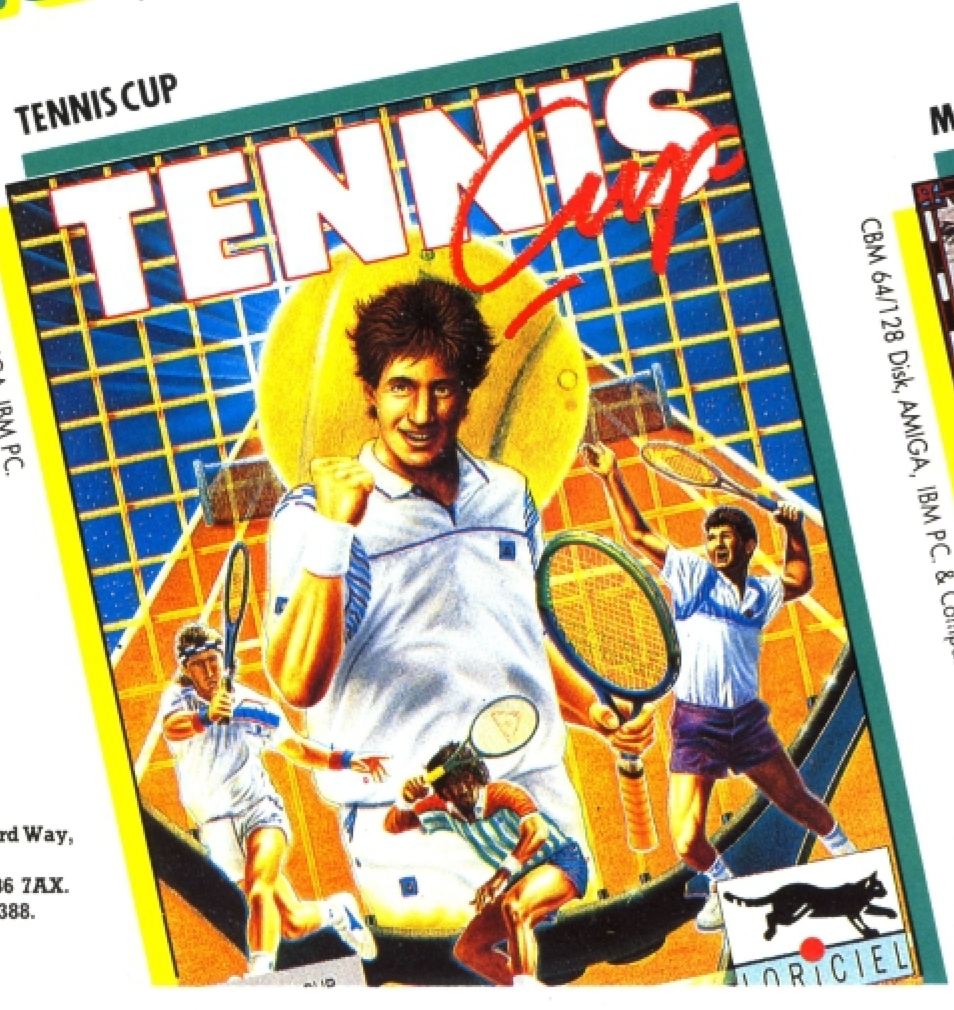
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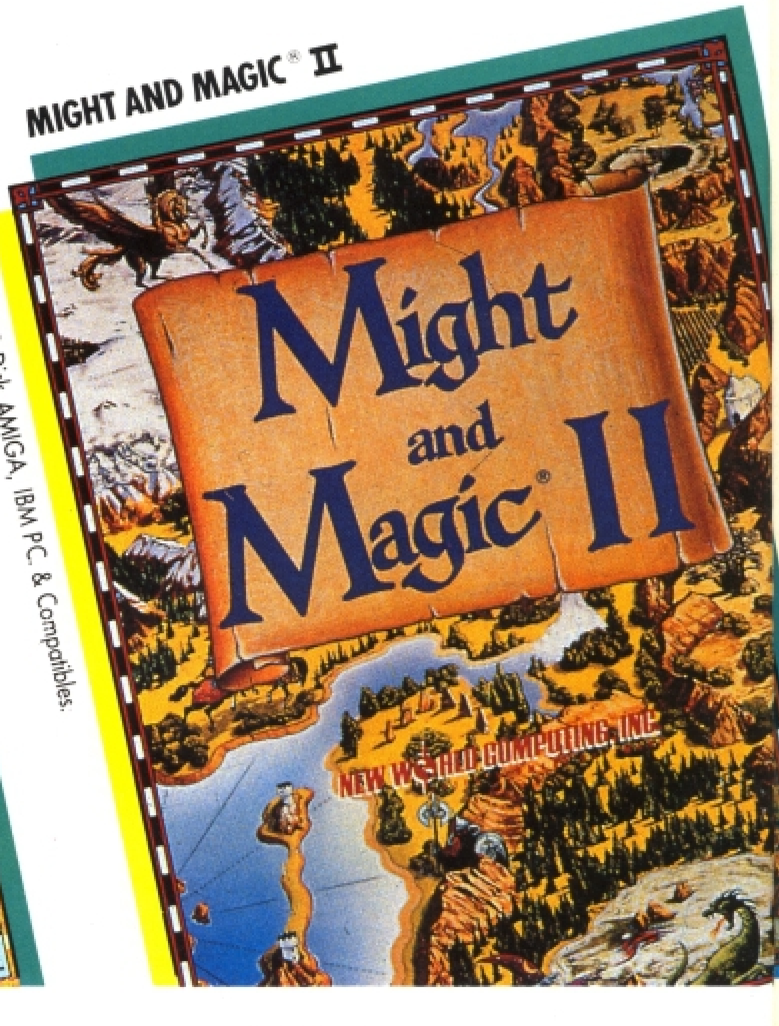
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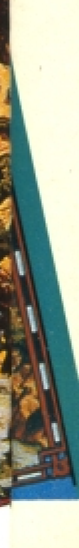
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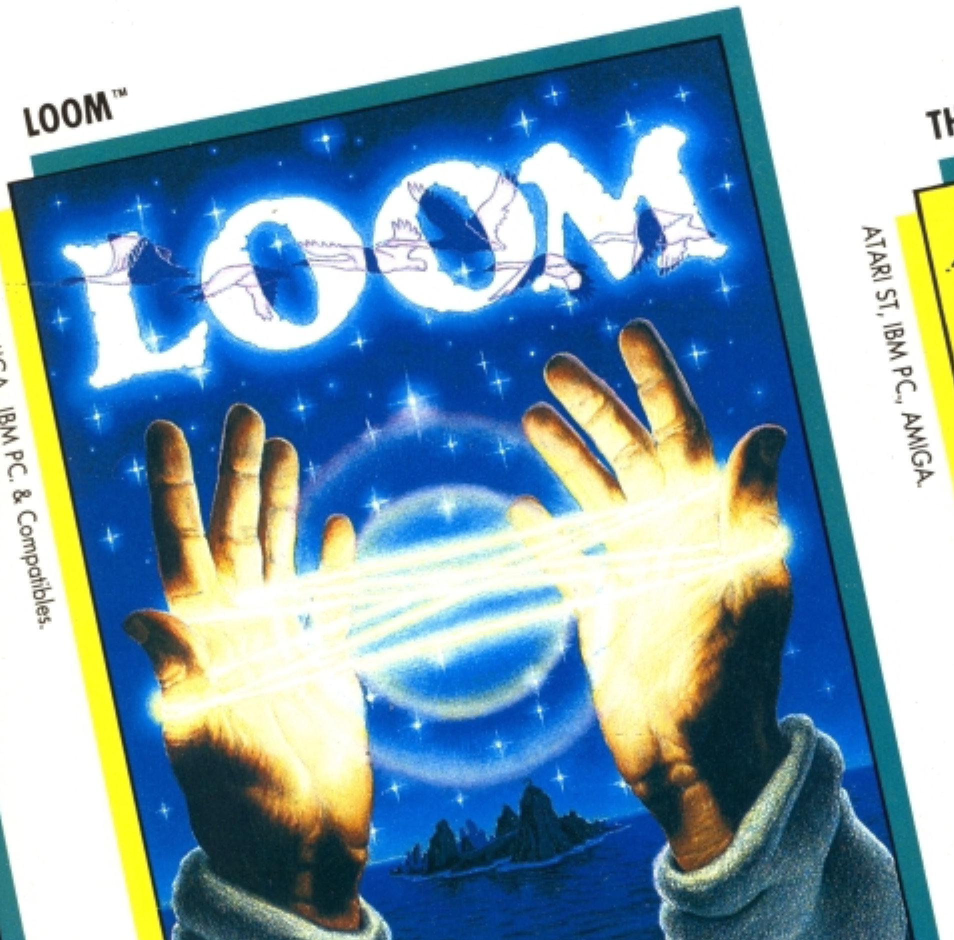
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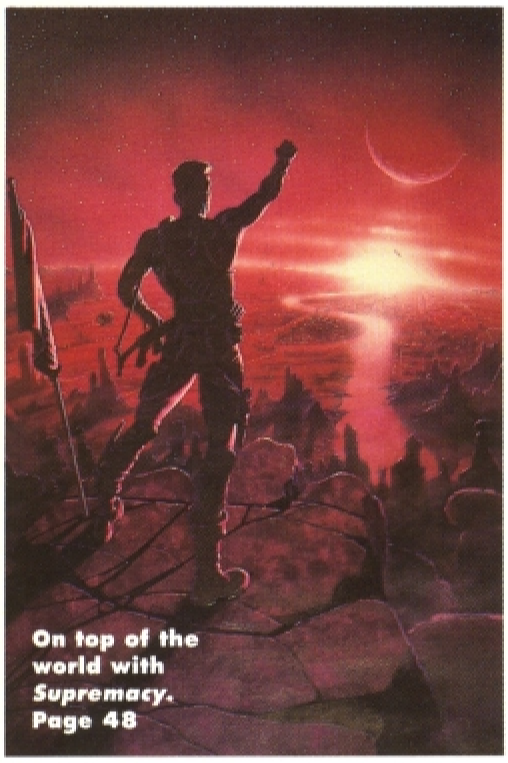
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ZERO 11



On top of the world with *Supremacy*. Page 48



Don't take it lying down. Page 26

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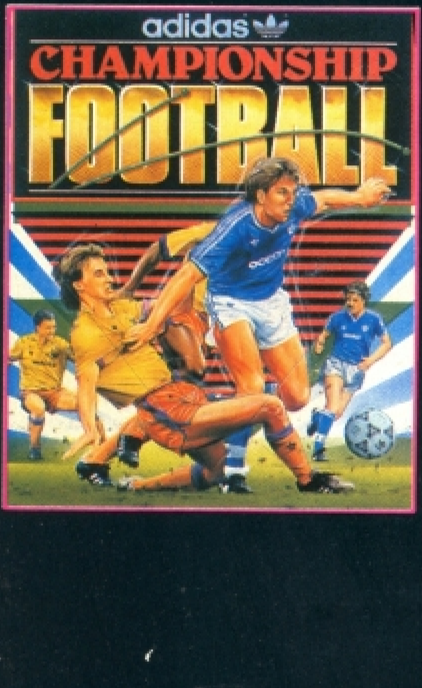


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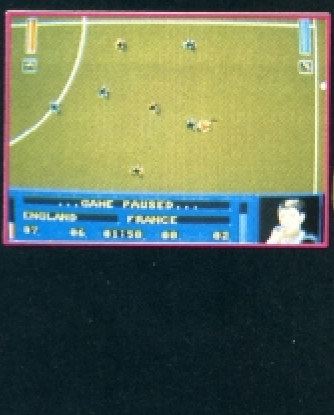
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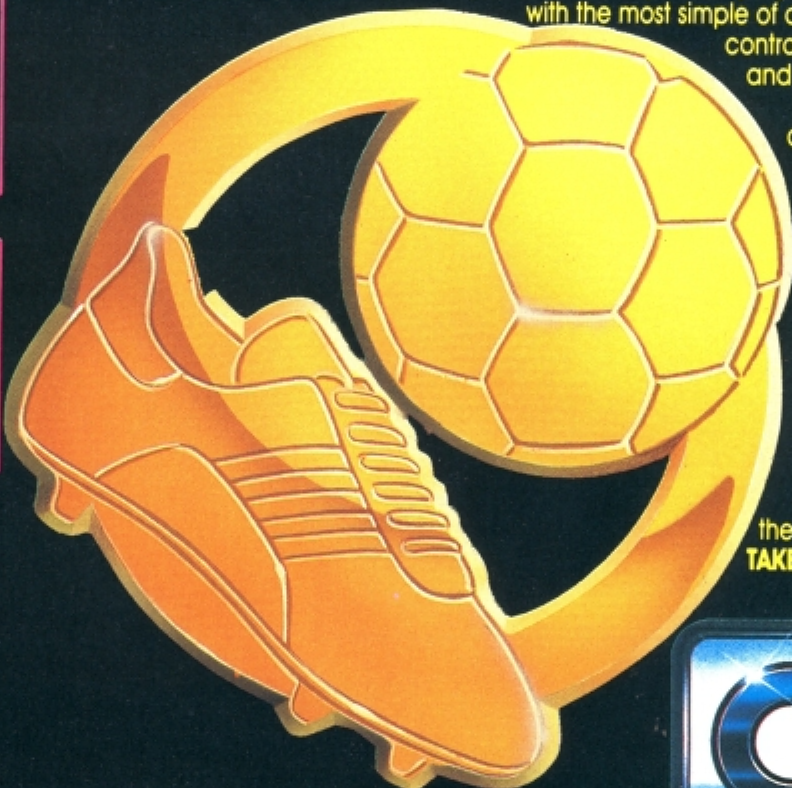






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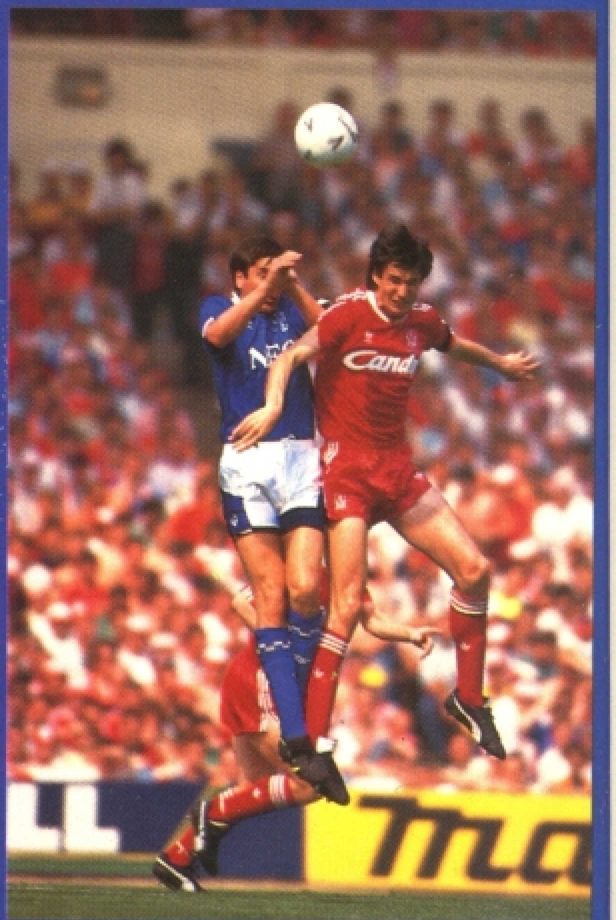
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Oi!

HAPPY AS LARRY

It had to happen. Sierra-on-Line's megaprat Leisure Suit Larry has become so popular with gamers both sides of the Atlantic that a film featuring the character is being lined-up.

Already a book called the *Leisure Suit Larry Bedside Companion* is scheduled for publication this September. This tome apparently gives "an insight into Larry's heart and soul". Oh dear.

A big screen adaptation has not yet been rubber stamped but Warner Brothers and other major studios are expressing tremendous interest in the project. Sierra is confident that the talks will bear fruit. For those readers unfamiliar with Larry, think of the weediest, creepiest, vainest, spectacularly unsuccessful womaniser you can imagine – and then double it.



ENGINE OUT

After months of rumour and gossip, it now seems certain that NEC won't launch its PC Engine in the UK. The European prototype, called TurboGrafix, was completed and was due to sell for £99. But when the machine was launched in the US it proved as popular as cultural exchange trips with Libyan students so NEC Japan has decided to concentrate its efforts on winning over the yanks. The machine will still be available from grey importers but with a rather larger price tag and without NEC.



DISNEY'S DICK TO APPEAR ON 16-BIT

The new Disney Software label will launch in September – with the computer version of the *Dick Tracy* film following a month later.

Conversion of cartoon megastars Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, Goofy and co. has been placed with two French firms – Titus and Nathan.

The label will be divided into three sectors, namely entertainment, children's and creativity.



The first releases will be largely children's titles. These will include *Donald's Alphabet Chase, Goofy's Railway Express, Mickey's Runaway Zoo, Mickey's Crossword Puzzle Maker* and *Animation Studio.*

The Madonna/Warren Beatty film *Dick Tracy*, will arrive in a 16-bit incarnation in October.

Also looming is a computer version of *Arachnophobia* – the current big movie project of Steven Spielberg.

BLUTH MOVES (TO ENGLAND)

Following the success of titles like *Dragon's Lair* and *Space Ace*, animation specialist Sullivan Bluth has decided to create its own label – which probably means more frequent releases.

Until now, Sullivan Bluth has only been responsible for the actual development of its cartoon-style mega-games; its products have been handled by Entertainments International in the UK. The US firm is now set on creating its own label and is to appear in its own right at the looming CES, which kicks off at Earl's Court, London, on September 13th. Three new titles are already under development for the UK market, and the new label – Sullivan Bluth Interactive Media – will launch the first of these next year.





ON THE GRAPEVINE

● Domark is revving itself up for autumn by lining up a blockbusting driving compilation, its first ever flight simulator and re-signing with coin-op giant Tengen. For the compilation, Domark has taken what it claims to have been the four biggest racing games of last year and lumped them altogether in one pack. It will boast Ocean's Christmas number one **Chase HQ**, plus US Gold's **Turbo Outrun**, Activision's **Power Drift** and its very own **Hard Drivin'**. No name has been chosen as ZERO went to press. In fact, if you hurry up and send your own idea in and it's used, those completely brilliant chaps at Domark might even send you a bottle of bubbly. Also in the 'coming in time for Christmas' category from Domark is its first ever flight simulation – working title, **MIG 29 Fulcrum**. Finally, Domark will be the label publishing conversions of Tengen's coin-ops for at least another year yet. A new deal which was signed recently means that, following **S.T.U.N. Runner** in September, there will also be titles like **Badlands, Skull And Crossbones,** and **Race Drivin' (Hard Drivin' II)** in the pipeline.

● King Mumbo Jumbo merchant Dennis Wheatley will be making an appearance on the new generation of CD-ROM machines thanks to British publisher CRL. **Here With The Clues** is a murder mystery specially adapted for the CD format with various audio and visual clues leading the player to the culprit(s). The game will be released for Commodore's CDTV, Acorn's Archimedes CD-ROM and all CD-ROM machines. Other titles currently being bandied about for CDTV conversion include Impression's **Legend Of The Lost** and **The Final Conflict**, set for Autumn release.

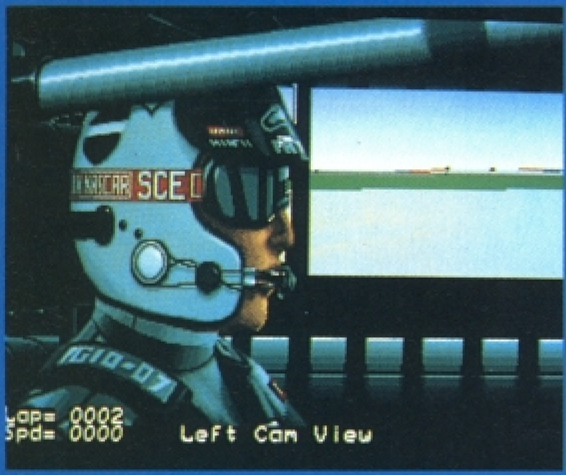
● Rainbow Arts has just secured a deal for a game tied in with US software publisher Lucasfilm. The game will be called **Mudsports** and will feature twenty stone nude female mud wrestlers.(*Liar! Ed.*) Er.. sorry, we've been rumbled. The game will actually be about a futuristic sport – a cross between American and English football (except without the rules, apparently!) – in which convicts play with living frisbees in a bid to win their freedom! Look out for it around October.

● Work is now in progress on the next game in MicroProse's Rainbird strategy series, **Betrayal**. This seems rather reminiscent of the board game **Kingmaker**. Up to four players can participate in a power struggle set in a medieval world, where success seems to depend upon how badly you behave! **Betrayal**, which has taken over two years to design, is set for an August release. Next on Rainbird you'll see **UMS II** and Mike '*Midwinter*' Singleton's **Starlord**.

Oi! compiled by Stuart Dinsey and Dave Roberts


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DAYS OF THUNDER



It's fast, it's dangerous and Tom Cruise has made a film about it. The 'it' in question is NASCAR or North American Stock Car Auto Racing. NASCAR consists of driving high powered saloon cars round high speed tracks which include 200mph banked circuits. (So the game could easily have been called *Friday Night On The M25*.) Polygon vectors and detailed course design aim to give you the atmosphere and exhilaration of the real thing. True realism freaks might wish to play the game with a mouth full of burger.

● Available from Mindscape in early September, priced £29.99 on PC and £24.99 on ST and Amiga.

APPRENTICE



The Guild of Wizards is like any other club, full of silly snobby rules – like all members having to be about 8000 years old. As a young rebellious 400 year old you're obviously not going to stand for this, so you rashly offer to kill the dragon Fumo. If you can manage this and survive all 34 levels then you'll be in with the in-crowd. The problem (and there is *always* a problem) is that only 16 of the levels are on the direct route to the dragon, so you'll have to hunt round for the other 18. When you find them they'll probably be so crammed with nasties and obstacles (to say nothing of nasty obstacles) that you'll wish you'd stayed at home and joined the local Rotary Club instead.

● Available from Rainbow Arts in mid-September on ST and Amiga priced £19.99.

PC CHART

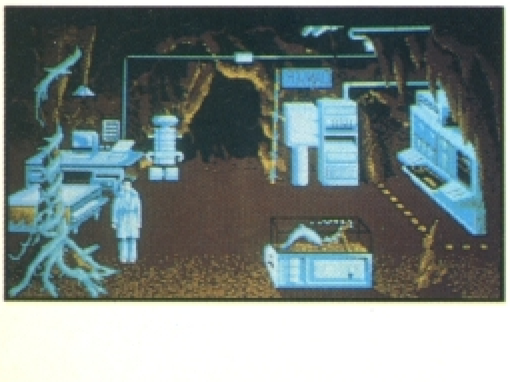
1. **RAILROAD TYCOON** MicroProse
2. **THEIR FINEST HOUR** Lucasfilm
3. **PGA TOUR GOLF** Electronic Arts
4. **SECRET OF THE SILVER BLADE/SSI**
5. **ULTIMA VI** Origin
6. **CENTURION** Electronic Arts
7. **HARPOON** PPS
8. **SIM CITY** Infogrames
9. **F-19 STEALTH FIGHTER** MicroProse
10. **ITALY 1990** US Gold

Shipping Charts supplied by the Virgin Computer Games Shop, Virgin Megastore, Oxford Street, London W1. Tel. (071) 631 1234.

MEAN STREETS

The streets are certainly mean. Have you ever managed to cadge a fiver off an inner city paving slab? No of course not. Fortunately Tex Murphy knows a bit about street life, being a 21st century private eye in downtown San Francisco. (Why does no one ever live in uptown San Francisco?) In his attempt to solve the mystery of the murdered scientists Tex interviews, interacts and interprets. When he's run out of things to do that begin with 'i' he gets involved in shoot-outs, burglaries and even charges round in a Lotus that thinks it's a 3D solid-filled flight simulator.

● Available from US Gold in September, priced £24.99 on ST and Amiga; £29.99 on PC.



CADAVER

A grim castle towers threateningly in a gloomy swamp. Within its ruined portals only one man lives, Dianos the insane and murderous necromancer. Sounds like the sort of place that you'd be advised to give a very wide berth. You don't though, 'cos you're a bounty hunter endowed with more greed than brain. You've been hired to put an end to Dianos. That's the easy bit. Getting to him is likely to be a bit more tricky since the game contains five levels each with about seventy rooms. The chances of many of these rooms being empty or safe is about the same as the chances of this latest from the Bitmap Brothers being a pile of old jobbies.



● Available from Mirrorsoft/ Imageworks in September on Amiga and ST priced £24.99. PC version to follow.

CHART

1. **KICK OFF II** Anco
2. **LOST PATROL** Ocean
3. **DAMOCLES** Novagen
4. **RORKE'S DRIFT** Impressions
5. **WORLD CUP '90** Genias
6. **CHAMPIONS OF KRYNN** SSI
7. **TURRICAN** Rainbow Arts
8. **F-29 RETALIATOR** Ocean
9. **THEIR FINEST HOUR** Lucasfilm
10. **MIDWINTER** Rainbird

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LEGEND OF THE LOST



Your girlfriend spends all her time criticising you for hitting the bottle and then she goes along and hits the ground – so now who's the clumsy one? To be fair her plane was being shot at by a lot of beefy jet fighters. In true B Movie fashion you set off after her and, guess what, you get shot down too! All is not lost, you can still impress your love by hitting baddies instead of bottles and rescuing her from the jungle. After that you can have a good stiff drink.

● Available from Impressions in September on Amiga and ST, priced £24.99.

FIRE & FORGET II

The terrorists have come out of the closet! No longer are they skulking around wearing Uncle Eric's old balaclava and taking pot shots at any legitimate target (provided it's less than 7 years old.) In *F&F II* the terrorists are driving a large Destroyer Convoy all tooled up with nuclear weapons. Do you think of danger, the possibility of a disaster on a global scale? Of course not. You think of a sitting duck. In your high powered combat vehicle you set off to wipe out this convoy of various varied nasties. Work your way to the lead vehicle or end up eating fried you on toast for breakfast.

● Available from Titus in September on ST, Amiga and PC. Price tba.





FINAL BATTLE

Anyone who imprisons an evil wizard in a teardrop has only himself to blame if the wizard escapes. He's probably not worth much pity when the wizard then imprisons him in something much more sensible like an underground cell. This sequel to *Legend Of The Sword* sets you the task of escaping and rescuing your companions from their cells and that's just the easy bit. After that you've got to collect six power crystals and they don't come easy. All this, 3D graphics and a weather system too.

● Available from Mirrorsoft/Imageworks this winter on ST, Amiga and PC. Price tba.

ALTERED DESTINY

A really good film can take you out of your world but even so P. J. Barrett (Middle Manager by appointment to the nonentities) could be forgiven for being a trifle surprised when he's sucked through his TV screen. He's no sooner landed on the other side than he's sent on a rather odd mission involving destructive jewels and missing brothers. During a mission which sees him traversing such locations as a Forest of Dreams and The Caves of Death, Mr Barrett will gain jewels and experience but'll probably completely lose his taste for home videos.

● Available from Accolade in November on PC, priced £29.99.





OPERATION HARRIER

Hold onto your stomachs 'cos Rotoscape is back. The system used to such good effect in *Rotox* is soon to reappear in *Operation Harrier*. This time it'll be ships, missile bases and enemy airfields that'll be spinning around beneath you. These need destroying, as do any hostile aircraft, if you're going to win all those lovely medals and things which so impress people's mothers and ageing Aunt Agathas. Failing that you can stay low and try to keep out of trouble. Who wants medals anyway?

● Available from US Gold in September on ST, Amiga and PC. Price tba.

WEB OF TERROR

There's not much of a future in a name like Rock Bimhead. Rock Bimhead Space Ranger sounds a little better (though not much). However Rock Bimhead Space Ranger On His Way To Rescue A Space Passenger Ship From A Huge Spider's Web sounds like nothing but a recipe for disaster. Even worse you can only carry four passengers at a time and have to keep half an eye on the fuel gauge. (Since fuel powers both your speed and your gun.) Your chances of surviving all 125 levels are about the same as a spider's when caught crawling out of the bath.

● Available from Impressions at the end of July on ST and Amiga, priced £19.99.



ACTION CONCEPT

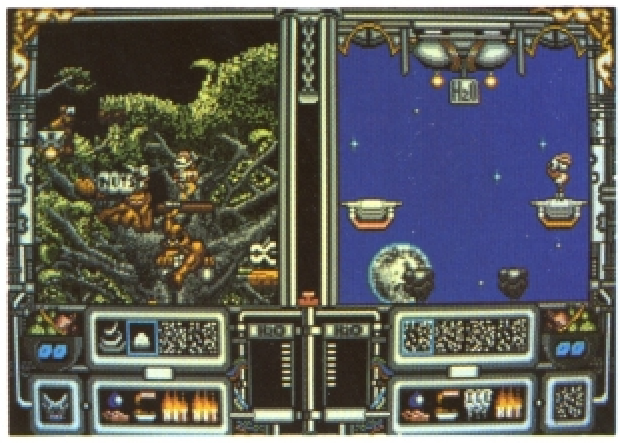


Erm... not really a preview this one but more of an update. Well, having said that, you won't have seen this screen before. Anyway, to get back to the point, remember we exclusively told you about Titus' Action Concept system back in issue nine? Starting with the first game *Commando War*, these clever French programmers then plan to bring out at least nine scenery disks to use with the original game system to produce practically new games. Well, this screen is from the prehistoric data disk. They look brilliant, don't they?! You'll get to control a group of ten cavemen as they dash about pursuing various objectives, fighting enemy tribes and dinosaurs!

Okay, now the bad news. Because Titus has signed the contract to program for the new Disney software label (See *Oi!*) the Action Concept games have been put back and are now set to appear in January 1991. From what we've seen of the project, we reckon it could be well worth the wait!

● Available from Titus, on PC, Amiga and ST in January 1991. Price tba.

FLIP-IT AND MAGNOSE



Mars is a far more exotic planet than our poor old earth. Not only is it an interesting shade of red but it also has much more exciting Prize Draws with rewards like a visit to earth. Unfortunately, as Magnose and Flip-it discover in this six level platform game, the prize has its drawbacks. There's no time for sightseeing since the two friends have to lay their hands on millions of gallons of water for their barren planet. There's not much time for friendship either as only one of the chums is going to make it back to Mars. Split screens and 20 individual interactive programmed characters are likely to be small compensation if you're the one who's left behind.

● Available from Mirrorsoft/Imageworks this autumn on ST and Amiga. Price tba.

RA

It's not easy being a god but it's even tougher being a small bug like creature known as a Scarabeus. Still, most Scarabi are probably unaware of the lack of career prospects in their line of work. One however is different 'cos one is you, turned into a bug for slipping behind in your sacrifice quota. And as if this isn't punishment enough, Ra, the god who you've offended, has built a maze and stuck you in it. To find your way out of the maze you'll have to deal with 100 levels of logic boggling puzzles and a 75 level arcade section. If this isn't tricky enough for you it's also possible for you to design up to 30 levels yourself. "Ha this puzzle will really fool me!"

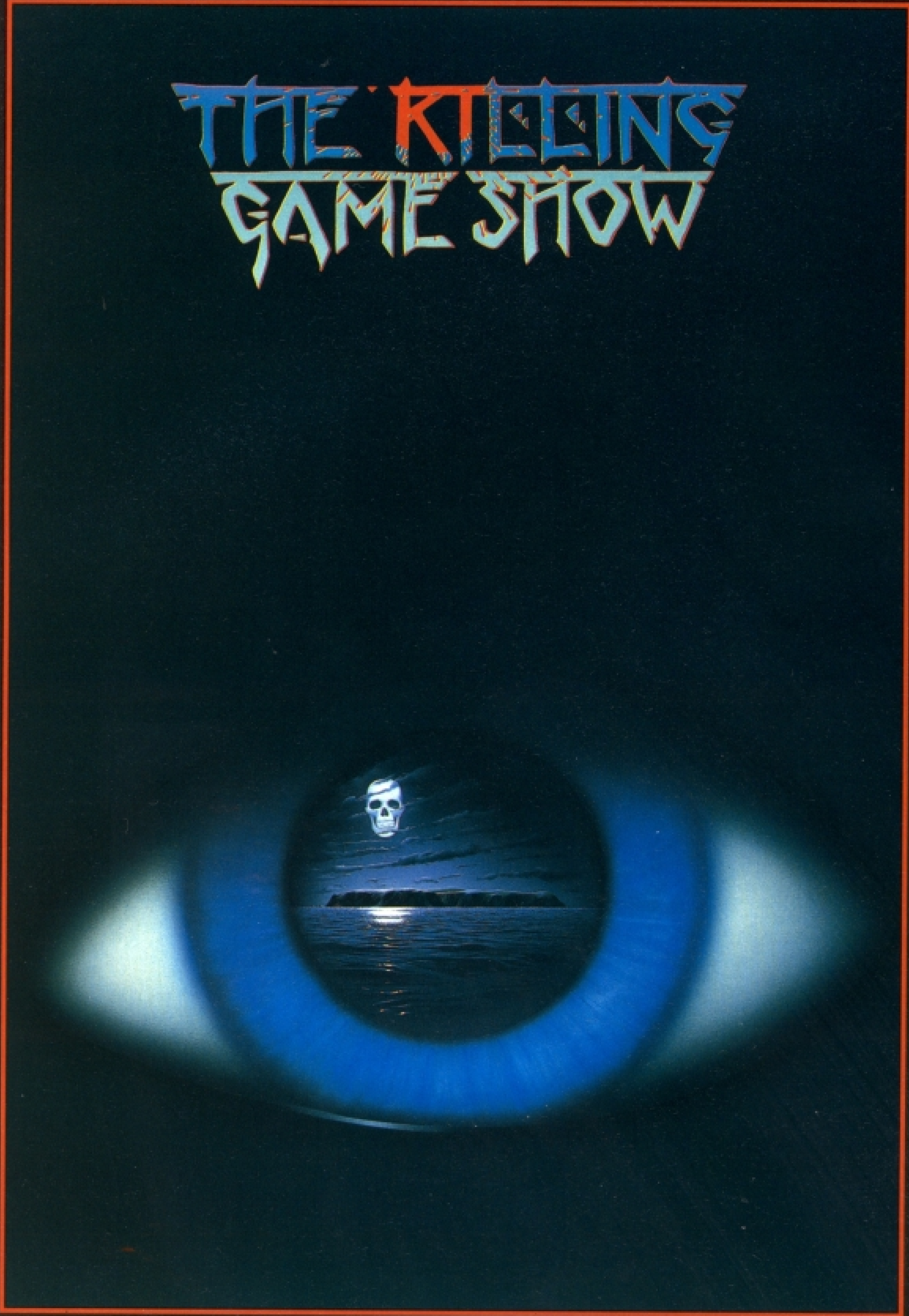


● Available from Rainbow Arts in mid-September on ST and Amiga, priced £19.99.

ST CHART

1. **KICK OFF II** – Anco
2. **IMPERIUM** – Electronic Arts
3. **F-29 RETALIATOR** – Ocean
4. **SIM CITY** – Infogrames
5. **DAMOCLES** – Novagen
6. **RORKE'S DRIFT** – Impressions
7. **ITALY 1990** – US Gold
8. **EMLYN HUGHES** – Audiogenic
9. **DUNGEON MASTER/CHAOS**/Mirrorsoft
10. **MIDWINTER** – Rainbird

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But . . . don't forget the rising fluid or it's "next contestant time".
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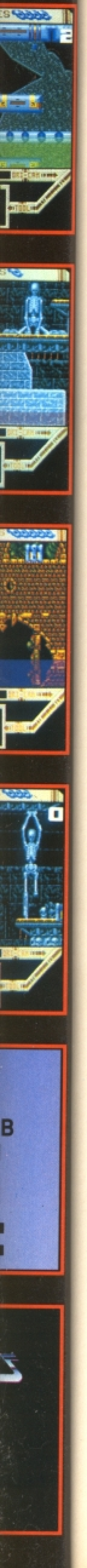
Screen Shots from the Amiga version

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LETTERS

ZERO HERO

I'm serious this time, deadly serious. None of this 'Black Shape' letters from Swedish tourists, ho-ho-jolly-butcher-mad-dog-McAlpine lark. This page is solemn, grave and grim. Cue music! (ominous funeral march on the organ) Cue lights! (gloomy shadowy illumination) Cue smoke! (swathes of werewolf film fog) Right, gimme your letters...

MORE HA-STE, MORE HASSLE

I'm peed off with this business about the STE. I own an STE and have been annoyed to find 30 games that don't load on the STE. I would like to know whose fault it is because everyone is blaming everyone else and more importantly what is being done about it? Should I keep my STE or get rid of it?

Yours very annoyed,
Iain Kempson, Clwyd, North Wales.

The letters on this subject are piling up. It's difficult to 'blame' anyone in particular for the confusion; but at any rate, the problem is clearing itself up as all the software houses recognise the STE as a 'different' machine and make it clear on the packaging whether the game is STE compatible. In the absence of a label, it's worth checking with the retailer or the game publisher themselves.

We're still waiting for a definitive guide to the differences between ST and STE (and the software that loads on each) from Atari. When they tell us, we'll tell you – but don't hold your breath unless you enjoy going purple. **Ed.**

ELVIRA SHOCKER!

Tut tut. Who have been naughty boys then! I realise the need to get an exclusive review before anyone else but reviewing a pre-release is a bit dodgy! I refer to *Elvira*, of course, which I myself previewed a few days back. In fact, you also used screenshots from the demo copy which was out about 3 months ago and totally different!

However, if you could give a little advert for my fanzine for the Amiga which costs £1.50 including postage and packing from my address: Computer Lynx, 187 Perrysfield Rd, Cheshnut, Herts, EN8 OTL, then I'll let you off!

Don't do it again and keep up the good work!
Jonathan Morris, Cheshnut, Herts.

No offence Jonathan – but you're talking out of your trainspotting bottom. Duncan MacDonald spent a day with the programmer playing the finished game on ST from beginning to end. Being a bit of a wobbly person, some of his screenshots were a bit wobbly too, so we felt justified in printing two shots of the demo – the main graphics of which are identical to the finished game – among the five other shots of the finished game taken by Duncan.

If you think we're going to publicise your fanzine after the way you've insulted our integrity... oh dear. We just have. **Ed.**

CRAPPY COMPO CAPERS!

I'm writing to ask who thinks up the compo's titles. Either the postie people need desperately cheering up or ZERO's work force have a crap sense of humour.

Personally, I get sick of writing essays – especially on envelopes. How about something short and sweet, eh? Yours pen running outingly,
Keith Whitehead, Holmfirth, Huddersfield.

What do you think, guys? Answers on a postcard please to Who Is This Keith Whitehead And What's The Matter With His Bloody Biro Anyway? at the usual ZERO address. **Ed.**

VIC TORY

If you don't send me a badge and give T'zer more reviews, I'll have to send you my old Vic 20 and programs. To help you decide I enclose a genuine Vic 20 BASIC listing! Make the right choice!
Ludwig Ledbury, Wantage, Oxon.

YET MORE CRAP

Me again. I thought you'd promised to become crap after issue 6???
Ludwig Ledbury, Wantage, Oxon.

That's nothing. We thought you'd promised to stop writing to us. **Ed.**

WE DON'T NEED NO STINKIN' NASTIES

You stated in your review of *Turrican* "and more aliens than you can shake a laser blaster at". None of your photos show any! Are they so alien that they don't show on camera film?
Andrew Lilley, Farnham, Surrey.

No, no, no, simple explanation: they weren't flying a white flag so Lord Lakin shot them all. Any self-respecting and slightly psychotic vexillologist would do the same. **Ed.**

THE GREAT BOOKIE SCAM!

Spooky! Isn't it! What is? I hear you ask. The last issue of ZERO! Look at the review of *Italy 1990*. Look at page 44, the results table. What do you see? What I saw! 4, yes 4 spot-on results! (The Argentinian, Brazilian, Scottish and Belgian matches) and 4, yes 4 again, implied results! (Italy, Czechoslovakia and Columbia winning and England drawing – all these results happened.) The results of some other matches I don't know at the time of writing (but I'll probably bet on them now!). The probability of ZERO getting these results is one in two hundred thousand and fifty two! Why didn't you release July's ZERO before the World Cup began? I could have made a fortune! (Never mind, eh – I only need £1.50 a month for ZERO.)
Alan Buxey, Gosport, Hants.

If we'd released ZERO before the World Cup then we wouldn't have got such good odds at the bookies and so couldn't have bought our fleet of E-Type Jags. **Ed.**

GOLLY! SABOTAGE!

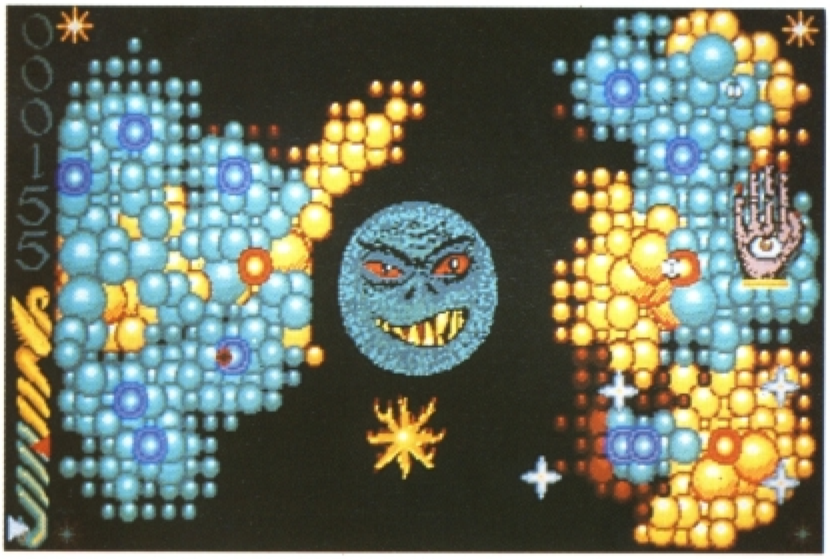
Getting straight to the point, how the hell can you afford to offer 12 copies of ZERO and a full price game for a miserly 15 quid? (Now answer truthfully!) Is it that the thin cut of A5 card, resting unobtrusively between the middle pages, is not, truth be told, printed by ZERO but placed there by a frenzied movement of ACE officials in an attempt to bankrupt your sales department?
Matthew Caton, Reading, Berks.

Erm... we can afford it because none of the Editorial team sat down with their mothers as small children 'to learn the value of money'. In fact, Duncan MacDonald's overdraft has now overtaken Brazil's GNP due to his hopeless addiction to flying lessons. As to whether it's being sabotaged by a rival – to quote Confucius: "magazine who boost another's sales to sabotage it is like man who build bridge across river for his enemy hoping it will collapse while he's crossing – a complete prat." **Ed.**

WRITE TO THE ED, ZERO, 14 RATHBONE PLACE, LONDON, W1P 1DE. Star Letter winners receive a ZERO T-shirt! All letters win a ZERO badge.

QUIDS IN WITH ZERO!

This month we kindly bring you a complete game and a playable demo – all for the price of two tins of dog food. Good lord, we must be absolutely barking.



What do you mean, *smile*? I am smiling, you blockhead. Just wait 'til you see me snarl.

CONTROLS

Loading: Both ST and Amiga formats auto-boot so simply put the disk in your computer, switch on and await results. Once the disk has loaded then press 1 for *Wicked* and 2 for *Time Machine.*

Joystick: Both games are joystick controlled. For *Wicked* it's fairly straightforward left, right, up, down, fire. With *Time Machine* there are a couple of extra options. With the fire button pressed a down movement on the joystick will make the Prof bend down and pick up any rock, log or small boulder in the vicinity. Pressing the fire button will then make the Prof drop the object.

WICKED

Complete Game/Activision

The zodiac constellations are being taken over by an evil darkness. Only two people can save it, you or Russell Grant. Unfortunately Russell is too busy knitting jumpers for colour-blind pensioners so the ball's in your court.

Having first selected the game balance (Arcade Bias, Strategy Bias or Balanced) you come face to face, or rather face to eye with the evil eye. This eye is surrounded by the twelve star signs ranging from Scorpio (Easiest) to Sagittarius (Hardest). Since you're a bit of a shandy drinker you can only select one of the first three constellations. Each time you win a constellation you are able to select a constellation up to three levels higher. (Levels are selected by placing the cursor over them and clicking the fire button.)

Once you've selected a constellation a map of it appears showing all the stars. Three of these are flashing, now that's a bit of a clue see. These stars are the ones you must purge of evil if Russell is to be left in peace with his knitting. Point to one of these stars with the dagger and press the trigger. Then it's time to stop star gazing and start star blazing.

GOOD AND EVIL

As you arrive in the zodiac system you're faced with good and evil portals which are producing good and evil growths. (How terribly unhygienic.) The portals and their growths are the same colour – red and yellow for good, blue and green for evil. There's also a golden star, which is your weapon and a demon, scorpion or some such Guardian of Evil.

The object of each round is to eliminate the evil portals by covering them with good growth. Since good growth can only cover evil growth that's been shot (turning it blood red) you must shoot a pathway from your good growth, through the evil growth, to your enemy's portals. Once he's lost all his portals the enemy chucks in the towel and who can blame him, what's life without portals?

In the middle of the screen is a face. When this is sunny side up then your portals start reproducing. (Have they no shame? Why can't they wait 'til they're in the privacy of their own bedrooms?) You can pick up these baby portals by touching them and can then drop them (on existing good growth only) by pressing the trigger. Think carefully before you place them.

When the face is on its grim side, evil portals are created and will be placed somewhere if you don't blast them first. While the face is in this ugly frame of mind it's also impossible to shoot the Guardian. At other times you're free to blast him back to hell and gain yourself some breathing space.

Occasionally the central face is replaced by a Tarot Card which chucks out a special crystal giving you powers good, bad or pretty boring. Learn to read the cards and know what's coming. Learn to battle through to the Sagittarius constellation and you'll win the game. Provided you beat the time limit of course.



Things are looking up for the forces of good – just goes to show three heads aren't necessarily better than one.

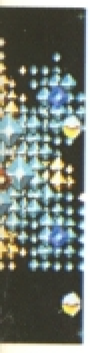
Guardian

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TIME MACHINE

Playable Demo/Activision/ Vivid Image

If saving 12 star systems seems something of a tall order then perhaps you'd better warm up with *Time Machine.* (Previewed in our last issue.) In this game it's only the evolution of the world that rests in your hands. Money for old rope really.

Professor Potts is not actually in the antique rope marketing business but is a time traveller. Unfortunately he's been blasted back through time by some pretty unpleasant terrorists. In order to get back to your own time and save your Time Machine you must oversee the process of evolution. This means making sure that the earth cools when it should and warms up when it should.



These little, hairy creatures will grow up into big, hairy professors – unless the fire goes out, that is.

It also means making sure that all your ancestors survive and prosper. To do this you're not expected to rush round sabotaging the primeval contraceptive industry. Instead you're expected to keep little furry four-legged creatures warm and safe. The safe bit can be a bit tricky since you're only armed with a rather feeble electronic beam. Rely on your wits not your weapons. STOP

IT'S A DISKRACE

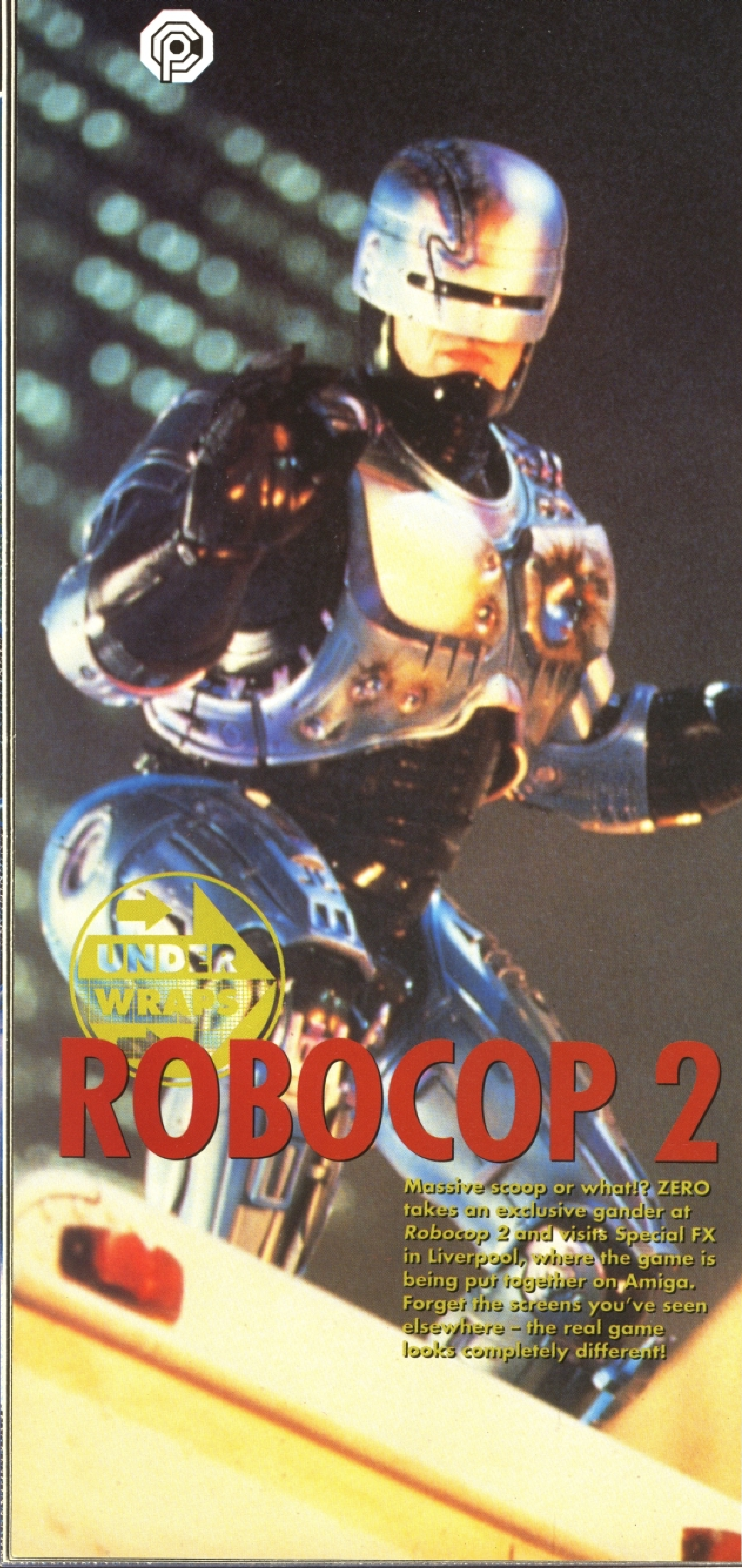
If you're having probs loading your disk then make sure you switch off the machine before trying again. Try a few times before taking the following drastic action:

1. Pop the disk, a note explaining the problem and a stamped addressed jiffy in a bigger jiffy bag.
2. Send this little lot off to **ZERO Disk Returns, Copytec, Alban House, 24A White Lane, Flackwell Heath, Nr. High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 9HR.**



INTO THE FUTURE
WITH
SHADOW OF THE
BEAST II
AVAILABLE FROM
24th AUGUST


"WIND BACK THE DRAWBRIDGE."
PSYGNOSIS

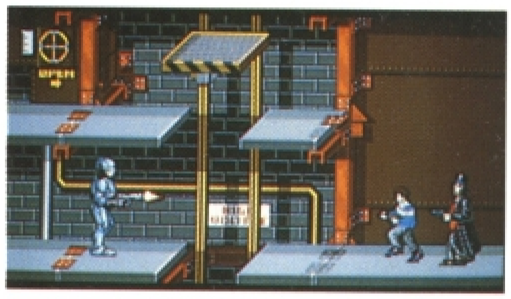


ROBOCOP 2

Massive scoop or what!? ZERO takes an exclusive gander at *Robocop 2* and visits Special FX in Liverpool, where the game is being put together on Amiga. Forget the screens you've seen elsewhere – the real game looks completely different!

Waiting for the film preview to begin, my mind was racing along like an aardvark at full speed. *Robocop 2*! What was it all about? Would OCP have taken over Detroit with ED-209s? Or would a new generation of Robotrafficwardens be running riot, wheel-clamping kids' bicycles and 'wasting' grannies? Would Robocop have taken up flower-arranging professionally after the emergence of Directive Five from the depths of his shattered brain: "Above all else, prepare presentation displays of begonias"?

No, no, no. Not at all. Robocop is back and he's... well, running round and shooting large numbers of 'bad sorts'. His old pal Lewis (bless her) is making sure he gets all the baby food an android could ever want and keeping his abdomen shiny as a new five pee piece. Some things never change – even if you do have a rather strange curved bit where your privates should be.



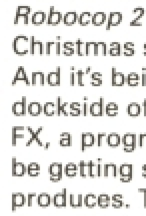
Hob and Cain practise their moves for the formation skipping compo.

JOYSTICKS IN PORTS

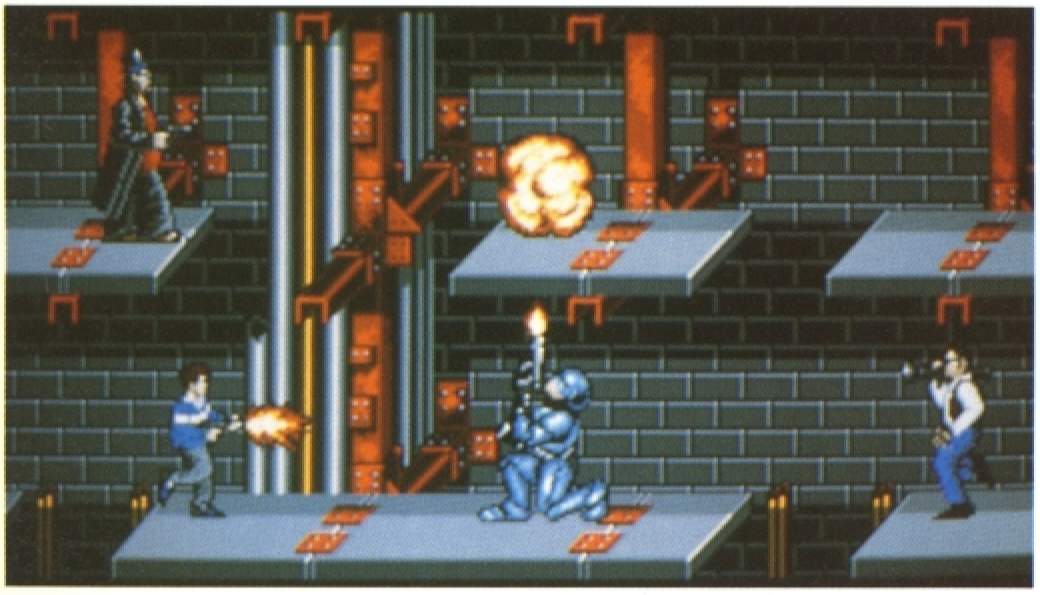
Robocop 2 is going to be a massive Christmas smash – no doubt about that. And it's being put together in a shady dockside office in Liverpool by Special FX, a programming team that seems to be getting stronger with every game it produces. The people working on *Robocop 2* all worked in one capacity or another on *Midnight Resistance* – good thing, really, since it got a rave review last month.

Number 2 has a similar form to the original game, with eight levels, consisting of four main 'view from the side' sections (full multi-way scrolling on the Amiga) linked by puzzle and shooting gallery segments. All have a time limit, so Robocop can't faff about trying to find a nice fern spray to finish off that lovely dahlia arrangement. He has an energy bar that shrinks when hit and he loses one of his three lives when it reaches zero. Erm... anything else? No? Alright then, might as well run through the levels...

LEVEL 1: RIVER ROUGE



The game kicks off with Robocop in an industrial setting. He has to fight his way through to the lab where Cain and his gang are manufacturing 'Nuke'. And is it 'a stroll through



Robocop goes into battle with a song in his heart and a spring in his stride. Must be painful, that.

the meadow'? Has he got time to make a couple of daisy chains to give to Lewis when he gets home? No actually. On the way he has to negotiate conveyor belts, shoot Cain's evil minions, arrange a few geraniums and blast a few more grunts just for the hell of it.

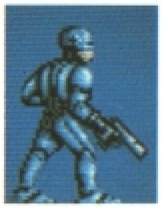
Some of the moving belts are magnetised, stopping him from walking and carrying him inexorably towards the crushers. To get past these, he first has to shoot out the switch. Other hazards include 'weak floors' (Robocop is so heavy he falls through at certain places), electromagnets which hold him still (making him an easy target for the bad guys) and booby traps, triggered by invisible infra-red beams.

Most of the drug-dealing geezers must be shot on sight, but a few have to be arrested. Every once in a while, the words 'ARREST MODE' will flash up on screen and one of the bad guys will be highlighted. Robocop must ask questions first and shoot afterwards – which is a bit difficult when every other sprite on screen is hell bent on cashing metal man in for scrap.

LEVEL 2: BRAINSTORM 1

This is a bonus level which you don't have to complete to finish the game (shandy-drinkers breathe a sigh of relief). You have to move your cursor around the circuits of Robocop's brain to help him 'remember' his identity as Alex Murphy. As you progress, a digitised picture of him will appear.

LEVEL 3: SHOOTING GALLERY

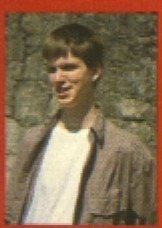


Rather like in the original *Robocop*, this is the section where you have to take out 'cardboard' targets, avoiding civilians but blasting drug dealers. Your accuracy in this bit determines the number of shots it's going to take to kill bad guys in later levels, so it's critical to get a good score here.

LEVEL 4: TOKUGAWA BREWERY

This is the section where Robocop decides flower-arranging is for pansies and decides to get pissed with the lads. Certain distilling vats in the brewery contain hidden evidence which Robocop must find. He has to drain one vat into another to uncover it, a complicated procedure involving

THE PROGRAMMERS



Ian Moran left school last year with 3 'A' levels. Don't some people make you sick? He 'used to do some games as a hobby' and showed them to Special FX who were impressed enough to give him a job on the spot. Don't you hate people like that? The first three games he's worked on there are *The Untouchables, Midnight Resistance* and now *Robocop 2*: a rather impressive debut really. Don't you want to chop some people up into very small pieces with a chain-saw?

There are many similarities between *Midnight Resistance* and *Robocop 2*: the odd forced perspective, the smooth multi-directional scrolling and the whole feel of the graphics. (They're being put together by the same team – Colin Rushby on the backgrounds and Karen Davies on the sprites.) But improvements have been made, largely because there's no two-player mode. The on-screen play area in *Robocop 2* is bigger and all the sprites are larger. In fact, it looks like the sequel, technically speaking, is going to wee all over the original from a very great height...

ICONS KEEP FALLIN' ON MY HEAD

Throughout the four main levels will be a system of icons that'll give Robocop extra powers. As yet, nobody seems to know quite how they'll work: the original idea was that Robocop would have to shoot them as they fell down the screen. But then again, how about hiding them in the background?

Auto-pistol – the weapon from the film. Robocop starts the game tooled with this.

3-Way – Upgrades Robo's gun so that it fires in seven directions. *(Three directions actually. Ed.)*

Scatter – Doubles 3-Way so that Robocop can fire forwards and backwards at the same time.

Heat-Seeker – Upgrades to homing missiles.

Reverse – The joystick's 'up' becomes 'down' and so on.

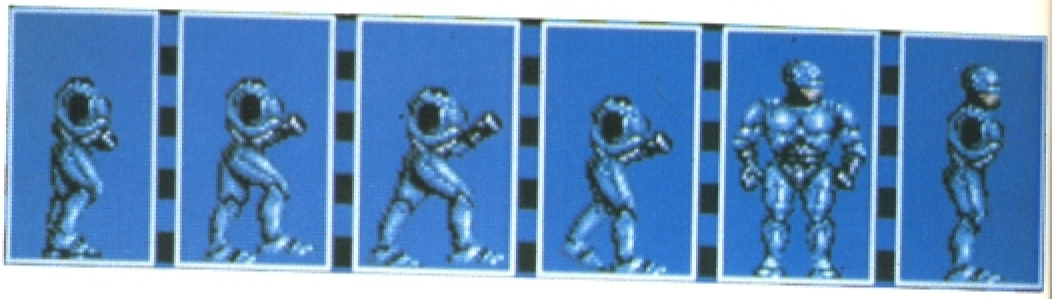
Thermograph – A bit of gear that allows Robocop to 'spot' weak floors, hidden doors and traps for a limited amount of time.

Time – Adds a slice of time to the count, giving Robocop a chance to run up a quick orchid corsage.

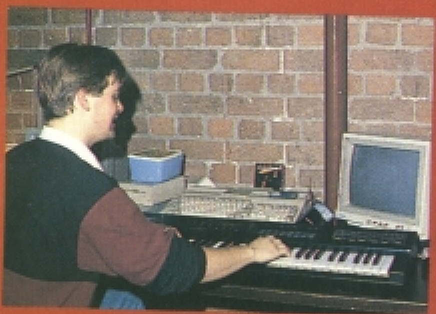
Baby Food – Replenishes his energy and makes him fart a lot.

Invulnerability – "Sticks and stones may break my bones but 9mm mercury-tipped armour piercing shells will never hurt me."

Mystery – One of the above at random. You shoots yer icon and takes yer pick.



TWENTY SECONDS TO COMPLY (THE MUSICIAN)



Keith Tinman, like all street credible musicians, is self taught. This means if you ask him if he uses crotchets, he'll say he's never broken his leg. If you ask him how many bars were in his last work, he'll admit to two (The Fox And Hound and The King's Head). And if you ask him if he uses vibrato, he'll tell you he's not into that sort of thing.

But ask him any questions about the samples he's lifted from the original *Robocop* film soundtrack and he'll know all the answers. (Well almost all.) They occupy most of the space allotted to sound in the game – about 200K. And pretty murderous they are too – bone-crunching walking noises, dentist's drill arm movement sound effects and an absolutely brilliant machine pistol roar.

After listening to the various samples and a quick burst of the opening theme, I point at the black box with the white keys and lots of green buttons, the Roland D-10 Wonder Machine. Can you do everything with that?

"Yep. It's really groovy, really big and really expensive. You can do all sorts of sounds – drums, church organ, harmonica, guitar, bass, strings, trumpets – everything."

But does he own it?

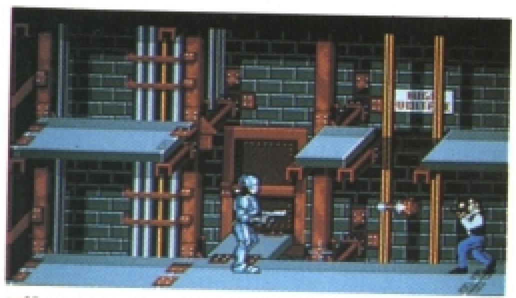
The answer is a sad "no" unfortunately. But he has been seen trying to sneak past boss-man Paul Finnegan with a synthesizer-shaped bulge under his jacket.

"What's that in your jacket, Keith?"

"Erm... ah I'm just pleased to see you boss."

different combinations of lever positions necessary to activate the pumps.

The main threat to Robocop on this level is from dangers hidden in the backgrounds. Drips of alcohol from the piping reduce his energy – eventually you lose control of him as he gets drunk! Crossing the open vats themselves requires pixel-perfect positioning and timing. Robocop must jump up and grab a moving hook which sinks under his



Yikes! That tourist's camera fires jet-propelled things!

weight towards the lethal alcohol in the vat. He must jump off at exactly the right moment: get it wrong and he's completely legless. Literally.

At the end of this level, Robocop must defeat Cain and henchman Hob and arrest them both. Not an easy task for a schizophrenic robot drunk in charge of an extremely large automatic pistol.

LEVELS 5 AND 6

These two levels are repeats of the Brainstorm and the Shooting Gallery sections. This time around, you're trying to help Robocop reconstruct the memory of his wife's face. The gallery will be much the same but probably night-time, making it harder. It's even more crucial to pump lead up cardboard ass here because it's the climax coming up...

LEVEL 7: CIVIC CENTRUM 1

By now Robocop is dead annoyed. He's remembered who he is and flower-arranging has never been further from his mind. (Apart from gladioli, he can't forget about them.) Hob-knobbling is over; it's time to penetrate the inner sanctum (oo-er) guarded by hordes of ED-209s. Robocop has to battle through to reach the computer that's found at the end of each floor. Plugging in his spike (oo-bloomin'-er again), he must solve a logic puzzle to activate the elevator to the next floor. After repeating that eight times, he reaches the roof...

LEVEL 8: CIVIC CENTRUM 2

...Where he is confronted by Juliette Faxx's horrific creation: Robocop 2, a larger version of ED-209 with the brain of Cain!

This is where the fun really starts. Robocop has to punch and shoot Cain until he falls over, destroying the roof and taking them back down a floor. This continues until they reach the ground floor and the final conflict – after which Robocop retires and becomes a florist.

LEVEL 42

This is a bonus part of the game in which you get to play a band with a small but extremely strange following who wander round waggling their thumbs singing 'twang twong bobble bobble wang' and claiming that they're not going to "Let The Sun Go Down On Me". I suspect Ocean might make them take this bit out and replace it with a nifty end-of-game sequence. STOP

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Robocop 2
PUBLISHER	Ocean
PRICE	£24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	November



Cripes! Blue beer! Robocop must make a grab for the hook to carry him across the vat of deadly alcohol.



ZERO GOES TO THE MOVIES

ZERO sent their own private dick, *John Minson*, out to see *Robocop 2* with a pound coin pressed in his grubby little mitt and a letter from his mum saying he was over 18. Unfortunately he came back! But it was with this exclusive preview of the film.

Dateline: The near future.
Place: Detroit.
Headlines: The police strike continues as criminals run riot among the rotting neighbourhoods of a bankrupt city. And the heat on the street is 'Nuke', a designer drug for the dispossessed, injected directly into the jugular vein. It's been elevated to quasi-mystical status by its messianic master, evil sadist Cain.

Meanwhile... here's a commercial for a new car security device. If somebody breaks into your auto it traps them in steel bands then fries them with a million volts. All you have to do is sweep them up into the ashtray!

In a grimly anarchic world, ruled by criminals on one hand and the mighty Omni Consumer Products on the other, thank God the cop with the skin as shiny as his badge is still out there. Ignoring the picket lines, Robocop and his pugnacious partner Anne Lewis are dedicated to annihilating the Nuke pushers and to thrashing main man Cain.

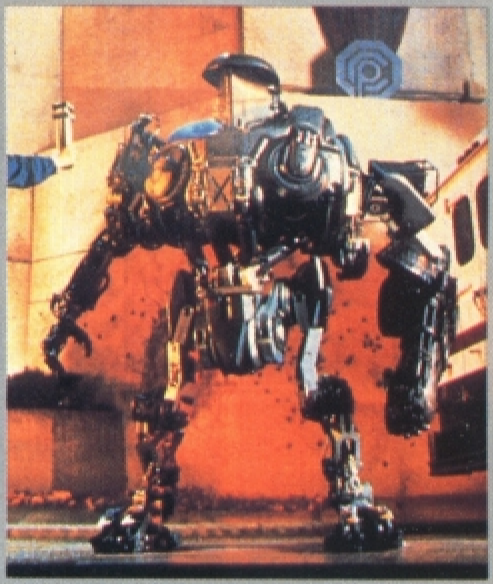


Steal my hub caps again and you're dead!

But the PC (as in Personal Computer) PC (as in Police Constable) has other problems to cope with. Is he merely a machine without a soul (and if so, does this scupper his recording career with Motown?) or is there still a trace of Alex Murphy, the cop whose brain lies behind the law-enforcer's mask?

Taking time off from such philosophical musings, Robocop raids a Nuke processing plant, destroying vast amounts of the drug. However he lets Hob, a savage, sadistic henchman of Cain's, escape. The Cyborg's circuits won't let him pull the trigger because Hob is just 12 years old and even a machine can't kill a kid – however evil he is.

What do you mean, I haven't got a leg to stand on?



Robocop 2 – the biggest breastplate, the knobbliest knees.

Ambitious OCP boffin Dr Juliette Faxx thinks Robocop's far too human for the public good. So when a follow up invasion of Cain's HQ goes wrong and Robocop is delivered to the precinct HQ as a mass of writhing scrap metal, she takes the opportunity to reprogram him with enough instructions to confuse a mainframe.

Directive 233: Restrain hostile feelings. Directive 246: Don't rush traffic lights. Directive 252: Don't swing your arms on a ballroom floor...

All of this makes for a friendly cop (evenin' all) but detracts from the day to day business of blasting immoral maniacs armed with heavy artillery! All Robocop's suitable for is crossing duty outside a kindergarten (high school kids might beat him up). All the time, the city slides deeper into chaos.

There's method in Dr Faxx's community policing madness though. With the cyborg cop acting like the good apple that spoils the barrel, she has the ideal reason to develop a successor... and to make it as ruthlessly violent as possible, providing she can find a suitably psychotic brain!

All this would be bad enough but Detroit is on the verge of bankruptcy. It can't afford to repay its debts. And who made those loans in the first place? OCP, natch! Now the corporation intends to foreclose and privatise the city, tearing down the old neighbourhoods to create a brave new world of monolithic skyscrapers run by big business.

Finally freed from the irrelevant directives and able to drive his car through a puddle again – even if it does splash pedestrians – Robocop launches a new attack against Cain, joined by Detroit's finest who leave the picket line to fight for justice and the American way...

But Dr Faxx is busy at work on the ultimate fighting machine, Robocop 2, and the death of Cain could provide her with just the brain she needs to sit inside its tin can cranium. Meanwhile the Mayor is being made a mysterious offer... all the money required to pay off the OCP debt. In exchange, he must legalise Nuke!

One thing's for certain, events are set for a mammoth slugfest as Robocop takes on a psychotic, Nuke addicted successor which is armed to its alloy teeth with every weapon under the sun...

Robocop 2 (18) stars Peter Weller and Nancy Allen. The script is by graphic novel creator Frank *(Dark Knight)* Miller and the director is Irvin *(The Empire Strikes Back)* Kershner. It's released on 12 October.

● This preview comes courtesy of Omni Consumer Products.

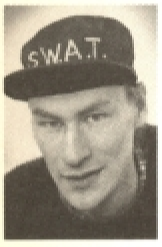


Murphy – are you sure about the pink lipstick?

ZERO reviews

CRITICS' CORNER

Seen *Vic Reeves Big Night Out* yet? If you haven't, tough, because it's not on anymore. If you have then you'll know it's a very "surreal" sort of comedy show, with absolutely ridiculous characters that are so unfunny they're actually hilarious. Well we think so, anyway. So we thought we'd dredge the depths of our Critics' brains to see what acts they'd like to bring to the show. Read on and find out. (Or alternatively sellotape yourself to Severiano Ballesteros and demand that children under eight pay Income Tax.)



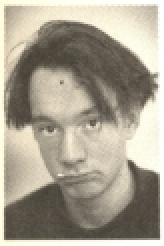
Tim "Sticks" Ponting: "Well, he's already got The Man With The Stick, hasn't he? So I can't be The Man With Two Sticks really, can I?" No, you can't. "Um, okay then, well how about this: Vic Reeves says 'And now I proudly present The Drumming Brummie' – and distant drums start to roll, circus fashion, as I come out on to the stage holding my drum and a stick. I hit my drum once. Then, out of the silence I say something very stupid in a ridiculously heavy Birmingham accent. Then I walk off stage." That's not very funny. "Er, well, it's a visual sort of thing. You have to see it."



David Wilson: "My one's even more visual" said David, "I'm called the Ninja Envelope Sealer. I walk barefoot, on a carpet of rice paper, to the front of the stage – where there's a pile of open envelopes. Vic Reeves says something like 'Can he seal all those envelopes in thirty seconds?' I start licking them shut but I do it so fast that I start getting paper cuts on my tongue (blood capsule in the mouth, you see). The more of them I lick, the more blood comes out, so soon they're drenched in blood before I even get my tongue to them. Then a dinger goes off and I walk off stage – although this time (because of the blood) the rice paper sticks to my feet and gets ripped up."



Lord Paul Lakin: "Super," said Lord Paul "I'll certainly be good at this. Vic Reeves announces me as Phileas Phlagg, The Semaphore Man. Then he tells everyone I'm going to tell them a joke by signalling with my flags. It's quite slow, actually, semaphore, so the joke I'm intending to tell will probably take about, I don't know, about five minutes or so. Then when I've finished I'll blow my whistle and creep backwards off the stage. Only audience members who are conversant in flag language will know what the joke was." Well, what will the joke be? "What do you call someone who used to like tractors but doesn't any more? An ex-tractor fan!" (Boom boom).



David "McVicca" McCandless: Hoodlum McCandless had no doubts about his 'skit' – "I march onto the stage with two fully loaded Kalashnikovs before Vic Reeves has even had a chance to announce me. 'Eh? This wasn't in the script...' says Reeves, then I let a few rounds off into his stomach and watch him fold like a napkin. Then I take out the cameras, the rostrum boys and the lighting engineers before turning the guns on the audience." S-s-so you, er, actually, er, *kill* the entire audience, then? "No, that's the joke. It has actually all been pre-arranged after all. Ha ha ha ha ha!" *(Blimey. Ed.)*



Duncan "Dipturd" MacDonald: Silly Duncan ought to be a natural at this. But he wasn't. "Er, I can't think of anything actually." he said. We threw a few ideas at him – dolphins, skateboards, pencil-cases, funny hats... "Ah!" he exclaimed, "Got it! Right I dress up as a dolphin, okay? Someone puts down two pencil cases on the edge of the stage. Vic Reeves announces that The Skateboarding Dolphin With A Funny Hat is capable of warping through hyperspace between the two pencil cases. Then I come hurtling onto the stage and into the audience." And? The punchline? "Er, I tell Paul's tractor joke again." Dear oh dear.

WHAT'S WHAT

Right you lot, stand to order and pay attention. Because if we've said it once, we've said it a thousand times.



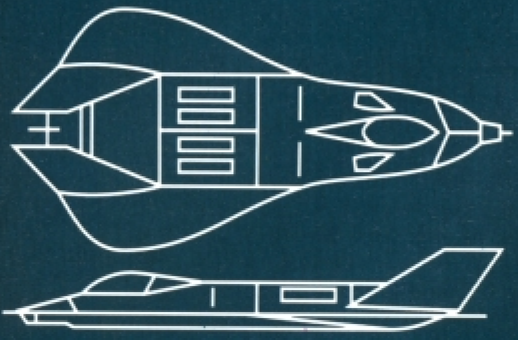
Games are marked out of 100 on four criteria; **Graphics, Sound, Addictiveness** and **Execution**. The first three are fairly self-explanatory but Execution may need a bit of illumination. Is there anything amazing about the scrolling for instance? Are all the sections of the game neatly tied together, showing a lot of care and thought on the part of the programmers? If so **Execution** will score well here. If you can't be bothered with all that then the **Overall Mark** gives you an at a glance summary. Now if we've said it once we've said it a thousand times... this mark is not an average of the other scores. Got that?

A game scoring 90 or above in the non-average Overall Mark department gets the much sought after **ZERO HERO** award (which is a flash way of saying 'buy it'.) Separate from the other scores (but not unconnected to them) is the **HASSLE FACTOR**. Are there 400 disk changes every pico second? Do you have to go through a boring title sequence before restarting? Things like that score here and they're marked out of 10.

Each review also contains a **WHAT'S WHAT** box which is basically a box which tells you... er what's what in relation to price format and release date.

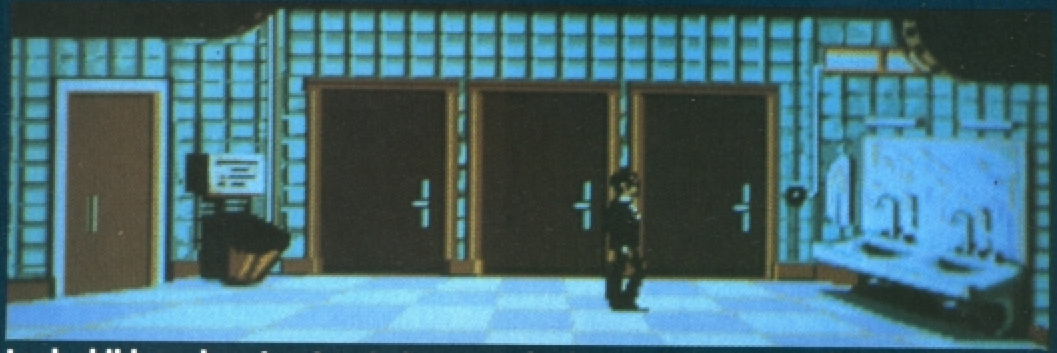
Well that's that for the main reviews but let's not forget the others. Firstly there's the section called **SHORTS** which is just that: short. It's a column devoted to a sprint through the best of the rest. Then there's the **DÉJÀ VU** section. Here you'll get reviews of new releases which aren't actually new at all (because they're already available on other formats). The **PRICE IS RIGHT** section is where you'll find the budget games reviewed. They only get an overall score because they're um... well rather cheap actually.

OPERATION STEALTH



ZERO HERO

David McCandless and Paul Lakin have always yearned to be spies. After failing to pick up any shapely Russian chicks, they practised a bit of enigmatic eyebrow raising in order to conquer Operation Stealth.



Look children, here's a handy lesson to be learned – even top-flight secret agents wash their hands after using the lavatory.

The Stealth fighter is a new, ultra-modern spyplane, that is so secret and hush-hush that even its inventor doesn't know what the hell it is. It is invisible to radar and has devastating firepower, a huge range and can even tell you the time in Buenos Aires. But this 650 billion dollar, 1400 ton, secret, locked-up somewhere very secret plane has been 'nicked', abducted, absconded, fled, gone... *(We get the message. Ed.)*

Emergency stations! An APB was put out instantly for a man with a big (415 foot) triangle in his trousers, but that only reeled in a lot of Swedish men called Dan from various video locations



Here's the beach – where's the barbie?

around the city. The problem still remains... the Stealth fighter is gone.

You play 'John', innocuous secret agent, assigned by the CIA to track down and retrieve the fighter, or else die horribly in the process. Intelligence suggests that the fighter is located in Santa Paragua, a 'greasy hombre' South American country (the kind of place you might be asked the capital of on *Fifteen-to-One*). You are flown there instantaneously, with only a suitcase and a basic knowledge of the local dialect (i.e. you can say "The pencil of my grandmother is in the back garden").

As super secret agents go, 'John' is very average. Decked in a dinner suit to suggest Oxbridge descent, knowledgeable on a range of subjects from elephants' gestation periods to obscure Babylonian demi-gods and complete with thinly disguised innuendos like, "Can I try my new weapon on you Q?", John fits the bill in every respect.

But your plan is thwarted from the start. Somebody has instigated an offical double-secret undercover espionage counterspy subterfuge plan, which, as its name suggests, is there to confuse you and your search for the 'man with the oversized samosa in his pocket'. Your mission is littered with double-agents, faked assasinations and cloak-and-dagger midnight rendezvous.

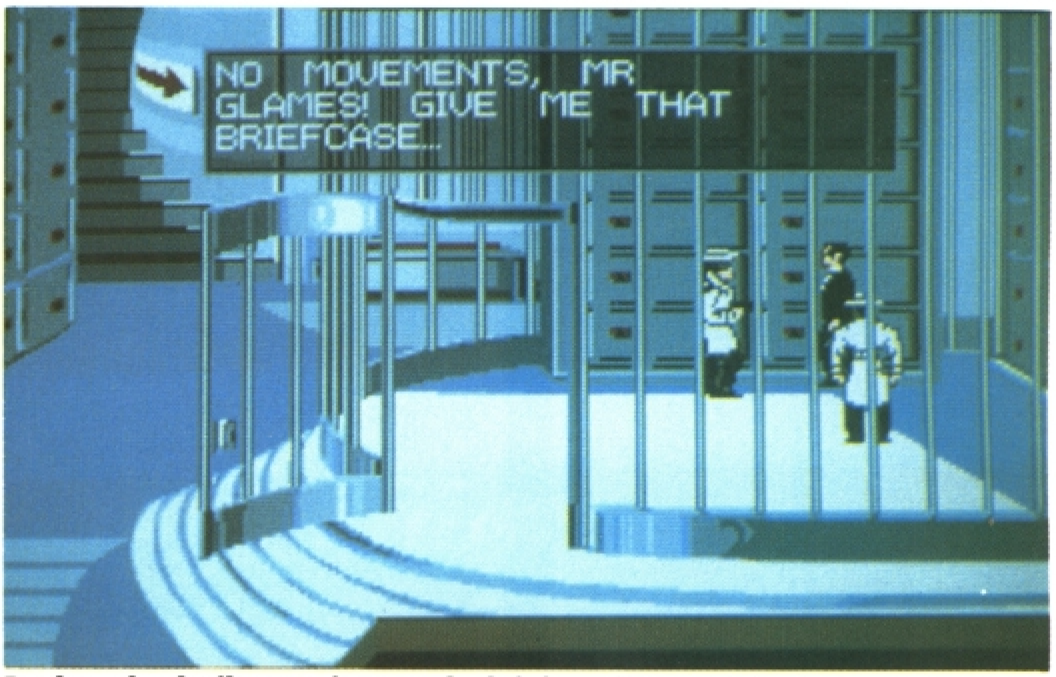
The game places you in the 'Cinematique' environment, which leads you by the mouse pointer through a series of exotique locations: airport terminals, flower shops, rural parks, hotels, caves, subterranean swimming pools – the usual James Bond locations. Control is all mouse. The left mouse button brings down an options menu. EXAMINE, USE, OPERATE, TAKE and SPEAK are your choices. Once you've chosen what you want to do, you must select what you want to do it to. This is done by either consulting the INVENTORY or scanning the screen with the cursor. The name of important objects pop up if you brush them while 'vacuuming' the location. Your mouse operations make a sentence (e.g. OPERATE BIG KNIFE ON HELPLESS ANIMAL) which John then enacts.

The mouse also directs the movement of 'John'. You click the pointer where you're heading and he dutifully heads there, cleverly cirumnavigating any furniture, dead bodies, sea defences etc in the way. Also, to ensure you're on the right track, there are certain 'set pieces'. The computer then takes over your speech and movement to handle complicated tasks like getting into a taxi or being cornered by two Russian spies.

The puzzles require a soupçon of logical thinking. For instance, it's not logical to OPERATE THE YOUNG MAN (you can still get arrested for 'operating' young men in some countries), but it is advisable to USE THE PASSPORT ON THE CUSTOMS OFFICIAL and not USE THE SHARP PICKAXE ON THE CUSTOMS OFFICIAL. Simple. Objects are generally linked to other objects in different locations. Using them correctly has a 'knock-on' effect – so solving one task gives you a clue to the next and so on.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	**Operation Stealth**
PUBLISHER	**Delphine**
PRICE	**ST/Amiga £24.99 PC £29.99**
FORMAT	**ST/Amiga/PC**
RELEASED	**August**



But how the devil can I give you the briefcase if I'm not allowed to move? Didn't think of that now, did you?

Macca: The last 'Cinematique' game, *Future Wars*, had me swinging from chandeliers, appearing in tea commercials, installing a series of dangling tyres from my bedroom roof and generally going 'ape' all over it. And the reaction for this new 'bijou' from the Delphine stable was much the same, perhaps even 'ape-ier'.

The main problem with *Future Wars* (and even that was slight) was that the objects were too small. You often had to vacuum every square millimetre of the screen, trying to find the pixel that meant there was a key under the carpet or a flush on the toilet. Now in *Stealth* only the major objects register and the rest just comes under 'scenery'.

HASSLE FACTOR: 1
A wait between screens.

Also, the computer has inherited the pessimism of its *Future Wars* forefather. The key to a good life is experimentation but try and experiment too much with the *Stealth* environment and you'll receive unimaginative comments like "That's not going to work," and "Why would I want to do that?". So 'OPERATE TOILET PAPER ON JOHN' is received by "What is the point of that?" Maybe the French don't wipe their bums.



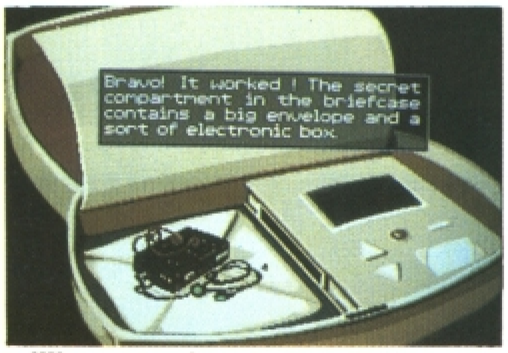
I'm being chased through South America by 85 KGB agents and you don't have time to talk?!?

The text is generally intelligent and useful, but there are lapses when the oh-so-witty programmers slip some 'jokes' in. This would be okay under normal circumstances, but in this case the programmers are French. When it comes to humour, the French are as funny as the Germans (i.e. not very). So the razor that says it will self-destruct, then counts down and doesn't explode (heh-hah) and the promising door that ends up being there because the programmer "thought it looked pretty" (hah-heh) are about as gripping as a bowel movement.

The graphics are not as outstanding as *Future Wars*. They are very good, colourful and detailed, but on the whole are less sit-up-and-dribble than its predecessor. *Future Wars* had a problem with everything being very small. *Stealth* has solved this problem by making everything bigger but has ended up looking more like a Sierra game to me. But they do look great, especially the sandy beach side locations. The sound is no way near as atmospheric as the Amiga's ditties and is frankly pretty annoying, but then, a swift twist of the 'volume control' will solve that problem.

For some reason *Operation Stealth* is incredibly addictive. I'm not sure why. It could be the vast freedom of movement and the fact you can do anything you want (within reason); it might be the lure of more exotic and intriguing locations; or the wealth of characters and situations – oh, the list is at least a page long. But for me, if I had to pin one down, it's the 'knock-on' object effect. Half an hour spent brainstorming over one clue is rewarded by another which leads to another and so on. You and everyone around can become completely involved, as the ZERO office will testify. At one point we had several freelance contributors, the staff writer, the publisher, and an Australian man called "Barbara" all grouped around the monitor.

Operation Stealth stands up as easily the most compulsive play since my Mum told me it wasn't exactly a 'sausage' that I always found in the bath.



Brilliant, I've found my walkman. Now where's my Banarama tape?

THE VERDICT

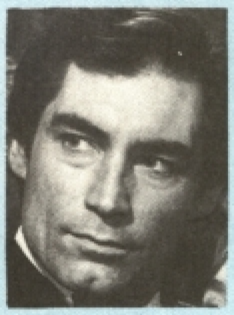
G	GRAPHICS	85
S	SOUND	84
A	ADDICTIVENESS	95
E	EXECUTION	90

20 40 60 80 100

So addictive it ought to carry a health warning.

94

TEN REQUIREMENTS FOR A GOOD SPY



1 A curvy 'chick' with a dodgy foreign accent who is planted to double-cross you but will eventually 'turn good' after she has slept with you.
2 A secretary with a vaguely rude name (if said quickly) like Miss Monneypenny or Miss Bigtitty.
3 A secret weapon concealed in the form of an everyday object, i.e. a flame-throwing tea cosy or a laser-firing pimple.
4 A facetious foreign contact, called something like "Punjab" or "Chang".
5 An eyebrow that goes halfway up your forehead when you are surprised.
6 An arch enemy with no head who has a 'thing' for big, white, fluffy cats.
7 Lots of explosives for the last 'scene'.
8 Er... better make it eight requirements.
9 (We get the message. Ed.)

OPERATION STEALTH

AMIGA

Paul: Well beat me round the head with a soggy back issue of *Trout Fishing Monthly*. There I was thinking that adventures were boring graphic monstrosities with about as much addictiveness as a packet of Junior Asprin and yet the clock's rushing towards midnight and I'm still in the office doing desperate battle with *Operation Stealth*. Much more of this and I'll have to start growing a beard.

HASSLE FACTOR: 1
Bit of accidental screen hopping.

Since it's so late I'd better rattle off my write-up pretty damn quick. Hmm let's see. Ah yes "*Operation Stealth* is easily as good as, and probably better than, *Future Wars*. If you liked that game then you'll love this one and, even if you didn't, then this is well worth a look." There, that was easy. Money for old rope this reviewing lark. *(Get on with it Lakin. Ed.)*

In any half way decent adventure game there are a good few seemingly insurmountable problems which can tie you down for hours or days or... you get the idea. The measure of a good adventure game is: do you still keep badgering away at the problem, even when it means going back six screens to see if you made a mistake? Or do you chuck the whole dang caboodle in the dumper and reach for a good old-fashioned shoot 'em up to vent your frustration on? With *Operation Stealth* you keep on keeping on because a combination of great screens and music make the game drip with atmosphere. Wrenching yourself away from the game is as difficult as wrenching yourself away from a good spy film. Except this time it's you, not Sean Connery, who has to make the smart moves. (Unfortunately it's Sean Connery and not you who gets to wear the smart suits. Check out those flares!)



I admit it's quite a nice try, but that disguise doesn't fool me Vladmir.

The *Stealth* control system is quite an improvement on that of *Future Wars*. Instead of the pixel precise positioning necessary to examine an object you simply click on it and your character will wander over for a quick shufty. Occasionally if the screen is very cluttered it can be a bit of a pain highlighting exactly the object you're interested in. (No, no, I do not want to talk to the lampost!) However this is nothing too unbearable and a good deal less hassle than the time when I was caught... but enough of that. The only



Six bullets in you and you worry about your sense of direction?

time that moving your, seemingly wooden-legged, character becomes seriously hasslesome is when he's near doors, staircases and the like. Since the cursor guided movement isn't completely accurate it only takes a slight twitch and you find yourself back in the room you've just left, which can mean waiting for another screen to load and then waiting to get back to the original screen. This may not sound a massive problem but this game gets you so tensed up you start getting hacked off with the most trivial of things.

Once you've sorted out the difference between using an object and operating it, the rest of the control system is straightforward and easy to use. As with *Future Wars* speech is fairly limited – you can choose when you want to talk and who to, but not what you say. Still this is no great loss, as the game occasionally reminds you you should be concentrating on "A little less talking and a bit more action."

The action in the game ranges from tricky mental problems to sudden and violent action. This may be something of a shock to traditionalists. It's one thing to sit down on a rock and work out how to open a secret door, quite another when someone guns down the man you've spent the last five hours trying to talk to.

As for the difficulty level, well it's all a matter of taste but I thought it was pretty well pitched. Real bafflers to slow you up just when you're gettting cocky, nice easy ones every now and then to boost flagging morale. Without giving anything away I would offer one word of warning. Some of the problems change each time you load the game so don't think "Oh I know the solution I did it yesterday" – you may be on a short cut to a very dark and rather smelly gaol.

Delphine have produced another classic adventure that's going to have enthusiasts locked to their computers all through a long hot summer. I'm going to sit back and wait for someone to send in the complete solution – or maybe I'll just have one last go... STOP



Oh goody goody! At last a prison that shows films to its inmates.

THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	88
S	SOUND	84
A	ADDICTIVENESS	93
E	EXECUTION	90

• 20 • 40 • 60 • 80 • 100

Easy to play, tricky to solve, impossible to put down.

92



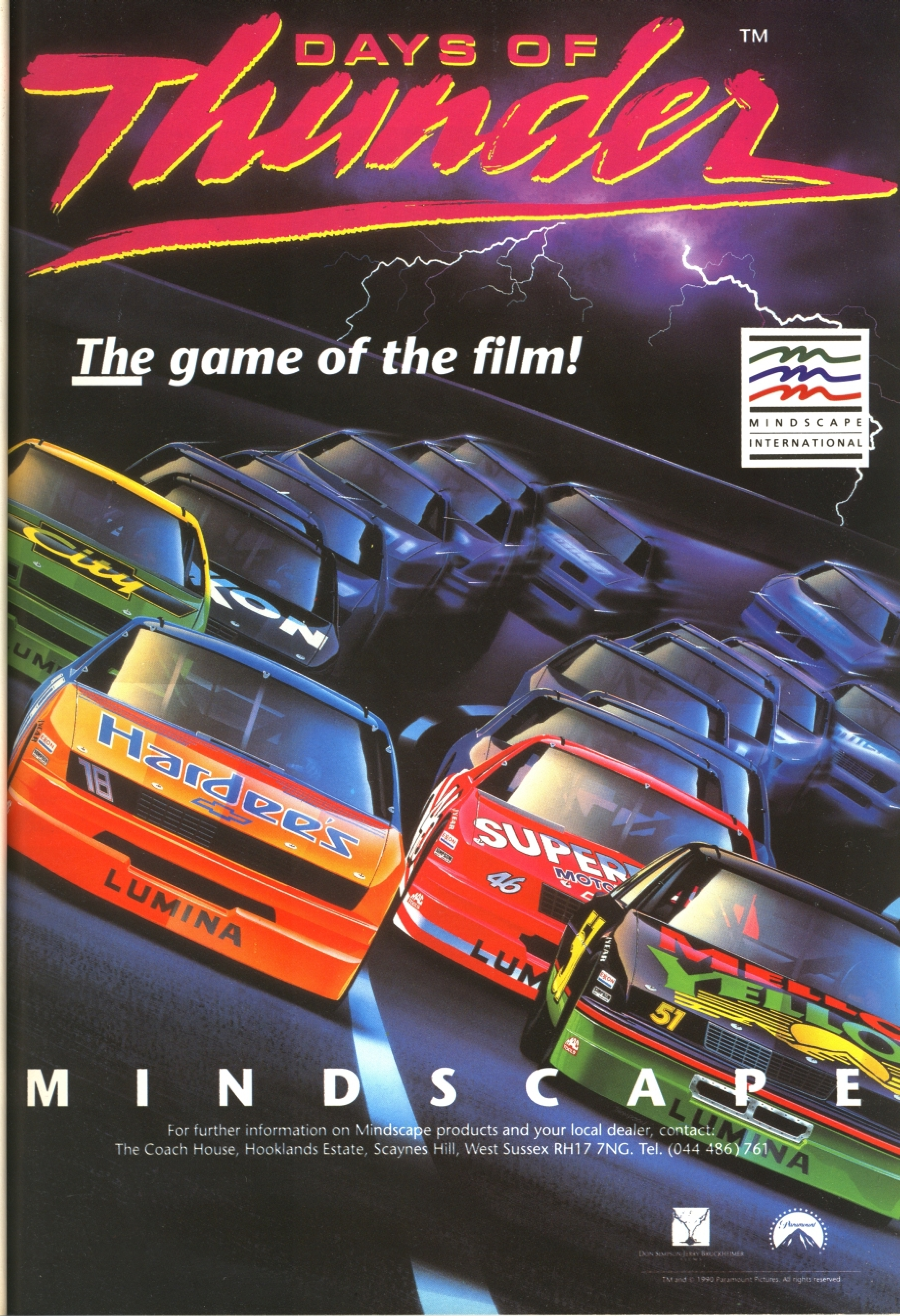
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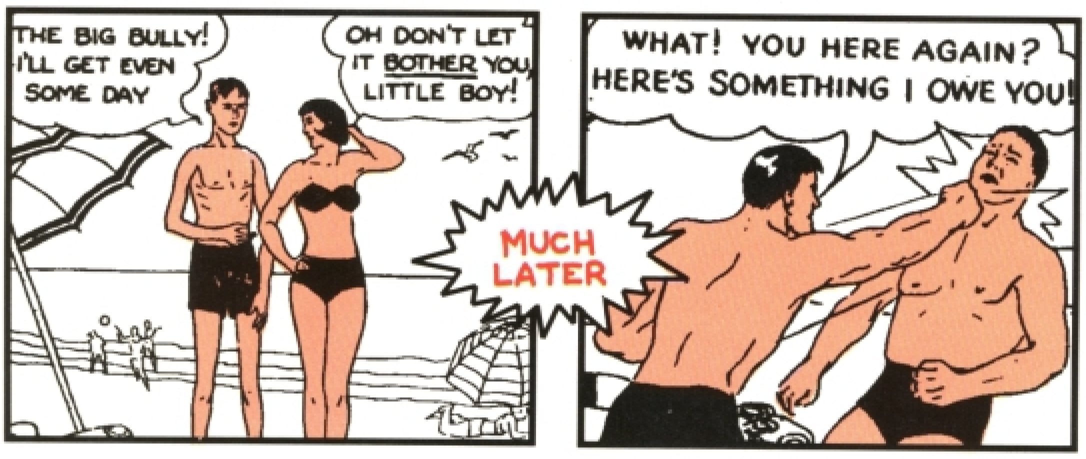
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2



UNDER WRAPS

TORVAK THE WARRIOR





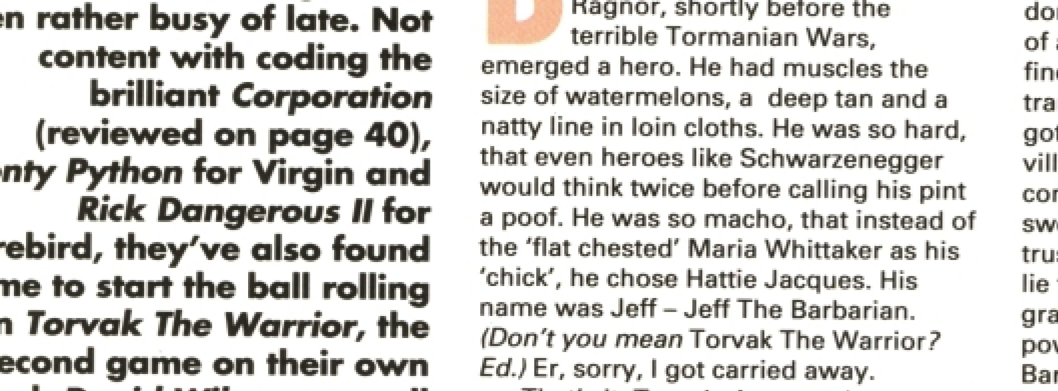
"Hello! My name's Steve. Would you like a game of dominoes?"

Blimey, Core Design have been rather busy of late. Not content with coding the brilliant *Corporation* (reviewed on page 40), *Monty Python* for Virgin and *Rick Dangerous II* for Firebird, they've also found time to start the ball rolling on *Torvak The Warrior*, the second game on their own label. *David Wilson* goes all barbaric and checks it out.

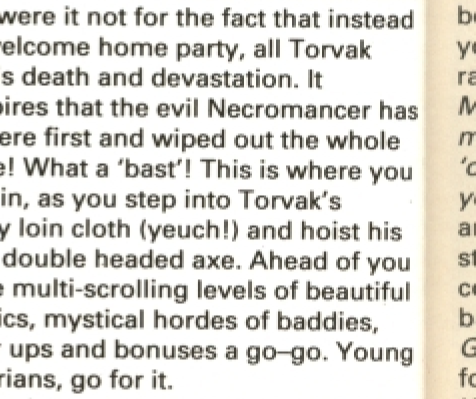
Deep from the shrouded mists of Ragnor, shortly before the terrible Tormanian Wars, emerged a hero. He had muscles the size of watermelons, a deep tan and a natty line in loin cloths. He was so hard, that even heroes like Schwarzenegger would think twice before calling his pint a poof. He was so macho, that instead of the 'flat chested' Maria Whittaker as his 'chick', he chose Hattie Jacques. His name was Jeff – Jeff The Barbarian. *(Don't you mean* Torvak The Warrior? *Ed.)* Er, sorry, I got carried away.

That's it, Torvak. Anyway, he went to war, then returned safely to his homeland. Sounds like we've missed the action, doesn't it? Indeed we would have done were it not for the fact that instead of a welcome home party, all Torvak finds is death and devastation. It transpires that the evil Necromancer has got there first and wiped out the whole village! What a 'bast'! This is where you come in, as you step into Torvak's sweaty loin cloth (yeuch!) and hoist his trusty double headed axe. Ahead of you lie five multi-scrolling levels of beautiful graphics, mystical hordes of baddies, power ups and bonuses a go–go. Young Barbarians, go for it.

Check out these graphics. Aren't they really colourful and crisp? Rather reminiscent of the *Turrican* style (which



"Ugh... Axe. Tree. Carve name. Hur hur! *Torvak was here.*" Good grief.



Give that gravestone a whack,

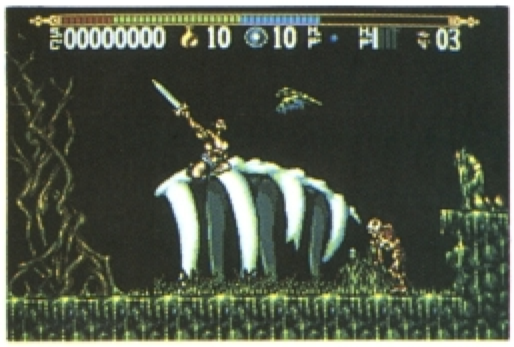


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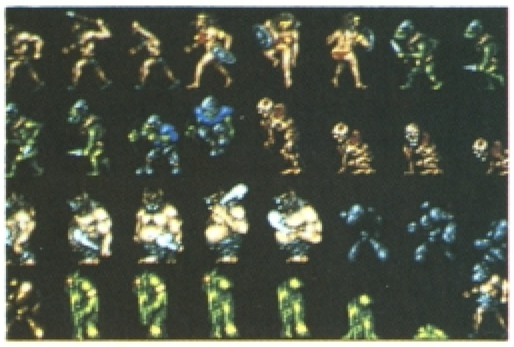
is no bad thing in my books). They're the work of Core graphic artist Lee Pullen. The coding has been done by Andy Green, a more established Core bod who's previous credits include *Axel's Magic Hammer*, *Dynamite Dux* and *Action Fighter*. Watch Torvak as he walks in front of animated waterfalls, bubbling lava and behind Grecian columns. If you linger too long on parts of the swamp you'll start sinking! As well as the variety of scenery, he'll also have a veritable arsenal of weaponry at his disposal. Let me see now, you'll start



with the aforementioned axe, but you'll be able to acquire further weaponry as you progress – there's a broadsword, a rather large hammer and a copy of the *Morning Star*, apparently. *(That's a chain mace actually, not a copy of the official 'organ' of the British Communist Party, you clot. Ed.) Torvak* is atmospherically animated – he walks with a determined stride, he leaps and crouches and contorts his face with a wide-mouthed battle cry as he strikes out with his *Guardian*... no, no his morning star. Due for release in September, *Torvak The Warrior* seems set to further enhance the reputation of Core Design! Stay tuned for the full review!







WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Torvak The Warrior
PUBLISHER	Core Design
PRICE	£19.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	September



In conjunction with Core Design, ZERO is able to offer you a rather spiffing compo. What we want you to do, is to draw a pen and ink sketch of *Torvak The Warrior* in a suitable action packed pose – you know the sort of thing, lopping off a head, brandishing his chain mace or having a 'snog-up'. *(Er... on second thoughts you can forget the last suggestion. Ed.)* Anyway the best one we receive will win a fab prize! Not only will his or her artwork be used in the playing manual of the game, but you'll also cop a professional airbrush art kit including a portable compressor!

Twenty runners-up will also come away with a copy of the game itself, so get scribbling now! Unfortunately, since the game is set to appear at the end of August you'll have to be a bit 'quick on the draw'... in order to make the manual printing deadline, entries will have to be in by August 31st 1990. All entries up to the 30th September 1990, however, will have a chance of winning a runners-up prize. So fill in the coupon, attach it to your entry and send it to My Name's Dusty Fleming And I Need An Airbrush Compo, ZERO, C/o Core Design, Suite C, Tradewinds House, 69/71A Ashbourne Road, Derby DE3 3FS.



RULES

- Employees of Core Design or Dennis Publishing air'nt allowed to enter.
- All entries must be in by September 30th 1990, but for the first prize and the chance of inclusion in the manual you'll have to get them in by August 31st 1990. (Sorry!)
- The Ed's decision is final and argument will entail the wrath of Tim... Tim The Barbarian.

NAME ____________________

ADDRESS ____________________

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I own an ☐ Amiga ☐ ST ☐ a pair of Rainbow pyja... (snip!)



whack, To

You might get a power-up icon!



What's a Grecian urn? About 30 drachmas a week! *(That's terrible. Ed.)*

GOING DOWN A STORM

The Battersea based Sales Curve recently announced the launch of its own label (as reported in ZERO issue 8). Instead of just producing work for other publishers, it's going the whole hog and bringing out its own games on its own Storm label. *David Wilson* went to investigate.



The Sales Curve Team.



Rottweilers? – A thing of the past! Ben, the Sales Curve dog, 'sees off' the man from ZERO.



The third colourful level and the action is heating up. Look at the detail in those bad guys but don't forget to make busy with the fire button.

The Sales Curve, like Core Design, is another development house with an established reputation which is about to become a software publisher in its own right. After working on games like *Continental Circus, Gemini Wing, Ninja Warriors* and of course the excellent *Silkworm* (all for Virgin), it's now announced its own Storm label. Oh, and it'll still be doing its fair share of development work for other publishers including the second *Judge Dredd* game (also for Virgin) and *Narc* (the coin-op conversion for Ocean), but at the same time it's got some pretty hot releases of its own in the pipeline. Shall we take a closer look or shall we talk about the football? *(I advise the former or you're fired. Ed.)* Hem hem.



Blimey! A mid-level meanie unleashes a salvo in your general direction. Hot stuff!

ST DRAGON

The first Storm release will be *St Dragon*, a Jaleco coin-op conversion, previewed in ZERO ish 9 in which you get to play a sort of dragon space ship. There'll be six levels of frenetic top notch shoot 'em up action as you fight your way to free a large dragon held captive at the end. The beauty of your dragon ship is that it has a large tail which is impervious to damage. You can sweep it around to swot aliens, you can wow your friends with Indian rope trick impressions – you can even wrap it around your head to shield yourself! It's quite tempting in fact to curl up in a ball, hedgehog fashion and let the horrors of war gently drift past. Ah me! Until that is, you realise that the big bullets can still get you!

There are a selection of levels pictured here showing the diversity of graphics and a selection of the beasties you'll encounter. Some of the 'end of level' beasties look like they're going to



What are the odds that this will open up and have something nasty inside?

be really imaginative – ships releasing hordes of aliens whilst firing rays at you and pods opening up to release a vicious beast that moves around firing normal shots and homing salvoes(!) that needs to be destroyed bit by bit. Oh, did I mention the numerous power-up icons to collect? *(You just did. Ed.)*

I haven't seen a decent 16-bit shoot 'em up for ages (in fact *Silkworm* was probably the last). Now this looks set to end with a product from those very same *Silkworm* programmers that could challenge even the mighty *R-Type* itself!

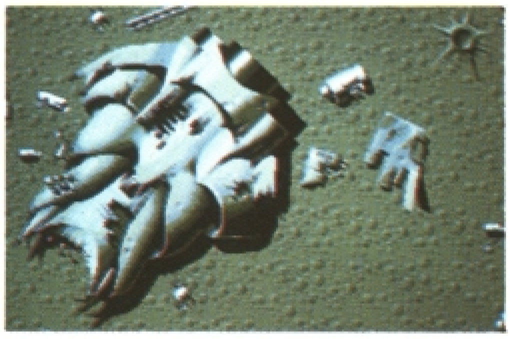
St Dragon is a challenging and exciting shoot 'em up rendered in colourful and sharp graphics that look as good as the coin-op. Due for release as you read this, *St Dragon* is a game that ZERO will very much looking forward to reviewing in the immediate future!

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	St Dragon
PUBLISHER	Storm
PRICE	To be announced
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	September/October

SWIV

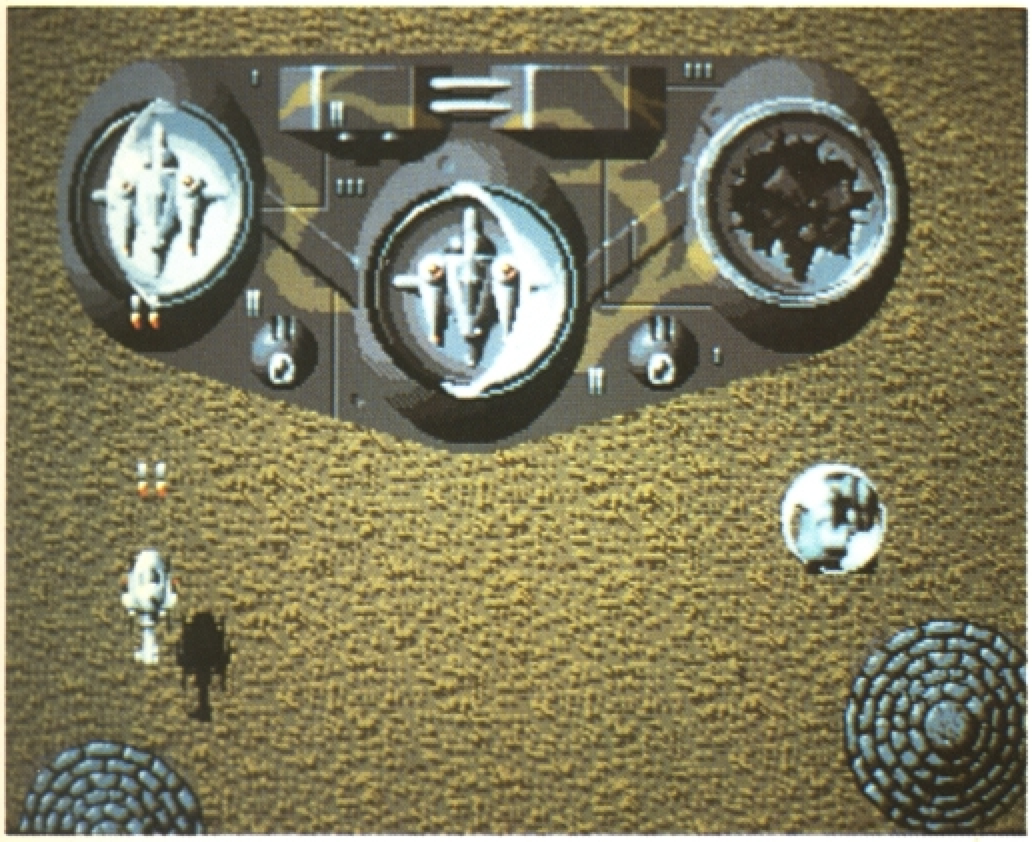
The second Storm title has ended up with the rather weird moniker of *SWIV* (also previewed in issue 9). The programmers are most emphatic that this has nothing to do with *Silkworm*, but the name seems to have taken its inspiration from the project's pet name of *Silkworm IV*. Although programmer Ronald Pieket-Weeserik did such a brilliant job on *Silkworm* (for me it surpassed the coin-op itself!) he just wasn't satisfied. He saw improvements that could be made and drawbacks in the original gameplay, but he'd been given



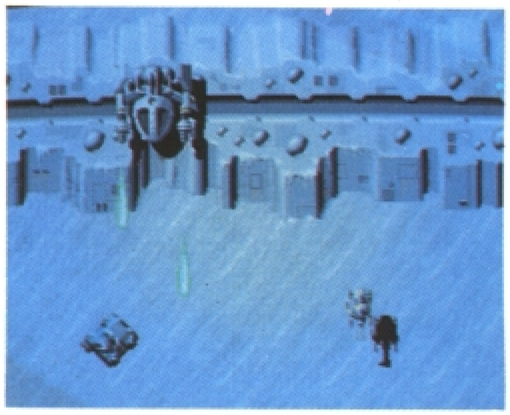
Oh well, his No Claims Bonus goes right out of the window!

his brief to render a faithful reproduction of the arcade. From this dissatisfaction, *SWIV* was born – a game that has "nothing whatsoever to do with *Silkworm*" but which set out to better it.

SWIV is a vertically scrolling shoot 'em up with the same two player jeep and helicopter team. In fact if you get



A base on the desert level. The helicopter will have to take out the three roof top emplacements by shooting each time that the protective domes open. Erm... well, I'm not quite sure what the jeep is up to but fortunately he's got a protective bubble! Groovy *SWIV* graphics by Ned Langman.



Hmm, let's play spot the graphic artist who used to watch *Space 1990*.

bored with either of these options, then at various points through the game you can change vehicles. Either you both swop, or else you can have two jeeps or two helicopters. The limited gameplay of the jeep in *Silkworm* is removed by the vertical scroll which gives it an equivalent freedom of movement to the helicopter. There are myriad ground and air-based foes for each to deal with and some pretty state-of-the-art graphics. Enemy tanks rumble forward with rotating turrets from beneath the edge-of-screen *Xenon II* type foliage, as minature SR-71 Blackbird lookalikes smoothly fly overhead. Like in *Ninja Warriors*, the programmers have employed a clever coding routine that minimises the amount of disk accessing. In effect the computer only boots enough information to get you moving, then accesses the next few screens whilst the game is in progress. There are no end of level interruptions – in fact there aren't any conventional end of levels, the whole will just scroll from begining to end. Although there are distinct 'world' settings and big 'mid level'/ bigger 'end of level' enemies. Oh and the celebrated assembling 'goose' helicopter puts in several appearances too.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	SWIV
PUBLISHER	Storm
PRICE	To be announced
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	October/November

WHAT'S NEXT?

Well, as previewed in ZERO issue 10, the Sales Curve also has the licences to two more Jaleco coin-ops, *Rodland* – a cutie platform game featuring two mean fairies(?) and *Big Run* – the Paris-Dakar rally game. The latest news is that it's secured three more licences – *Combatribes, Double Dragon III* and *Final Blow*, another arcade conversion, this time from Taito – a boxing game that scored a big hit in the arcades last summer. STOP

BATTLEMASTER

He's not one to suffer abrupt bowel evacuation and lamb-like 'mummy! daddy!' bleating when a fight's in the offing, but *David 'Yellow Streak' McCandless* normally decides to move like jiggery when wholesale violence is on the menu. However, he decided *Battlemaster* was one big fisty-cuff sesh he'd like to stick around and see.



WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Battlemaster
PUBLISHER	PSS/Mirrorsoft
PRICE	ST £24.99 PC £29.99 Amiga £29.99
FORMAT	ST/PC/Amiga
RELEASED	ST/Amiga Out now PC September

Uh-oh, it's fantasy Dungeons 'n' Dragons fabled magic realm time (again). Cue lots of mysterious 'eerie' locations with bizarre and unlikely names like The Cracks Of Doom and The Blood Wastes. Cue a large group of fey elves gambolling around the countryside, playing lutes and *Smiths* records. Cue vast amounts of stocky ale-swilling dwarves, pulling their beards, breaking wind and fondling each others gimlets. Cue hoardes of pug-ugly green orcs, speaking in fake German accents and smelling of garlic. (*Are you sure of this? Ed.*) Cue a quest for a magic ring (or bracelet or earring or something) and a big, evil demon called George and probably a dragon as well.

In the world of *Battlemaster* – let's call it Brighton for argument's sake – the four kingdoms are at war. They are at it tooth and claw. The inter-racial relationships are simply summed up by the wise old instructions: "Dwarves hate Elves and Orcs; Elves hate Dwarves and Orcs; Humans like no one but despise Orcs most; and Orcs hate absolutely everybody."



Here you can choose your leader, but do you really want a moniker like Hollomere Wibble.

This interesting allegory also neatly sums up the current European situation, if you replace dwarves, elves, humans and orcs with English, Germans, French and Margaret Thatcher respectively.

The four races have always been scrapping. They tried to decide on a common currency but the orcs were being too picky about that one. More recently, however, things have degenerated after offensive remarks made by a dwarfish minister, Nicklerag Riddleybuster. Death and chaos seem inevitable and unless the four splintered shards of the Keystone Of Life are united the whole world will come to an end. Okay you say, simply get the four pieces, bung them together, heat for 15 minutes at Gas Mark 3 and serve with green beans and swede (yum). Not so fast, I reply. The four shards are embedded in the four crowns of the four kings of the four races. (*Four-king hell! Ed.*) To retrieve the four shards, we need someone gullible, stupid and not breast-fed enough... um, you in fact.

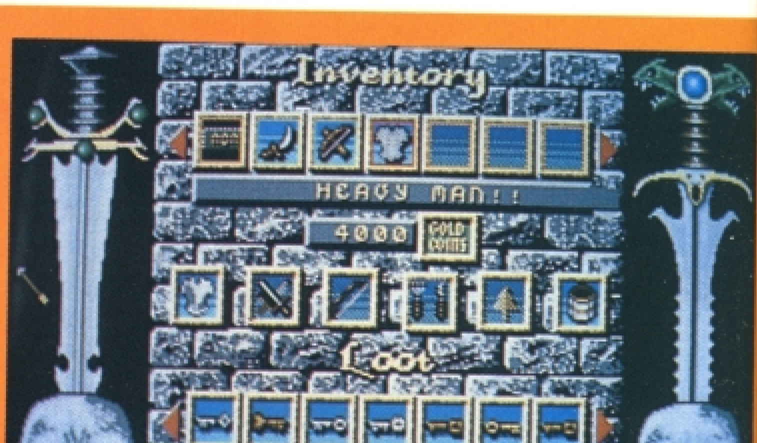
Your first task is to select a leader from a gruesome portrait gallery of sixteen. No matter what species or character you decide to be, you will always have a merry band of up to fifteen 'chums' in tow and a bulging quota of grub and booze to sustain you.

You'll need your pals' support as well. Brighton is fraught with creepy crawlies. Apart from your average giant spiders and over-sized snakes, you also have to deal death to big black bats, 'grinning ghosts' and funny, bouncing, green balls. Brighton's a dangerous old place.

It's also a large old place. Each of the four scrolling playing areas is filled with about twelve screens' worth of trees, rocks, bridges, swamps, rivers, canyons, mazes, houses, caverns – all seen from a 60 degree vantage. 60 degrees is that



This is the last time I go to a fancy dress party with you lot. You know full well I was going as Robin Hood!



Hmm... 'Heavy man!' This obviously means that you haven't got a pint of 'Miller Lite' in your inventory.



Look lads don't crowd me, it's not my fault we lost the front door key!

cunning fantasy-game angle from which walls and trees look 'flat' until you walk under them and disappear. All good D 'n' D games feature it.

In fact, *Battlemaster* has a lot in common with other swords 'n' sorcery extravaganzas. It has an inventory screen, where you can swap, manipulate and trade objects; there is a whole vista of objects, keys and doors and chests to be explored and examined; there are a wide range of weapons which are suited to different combat situtations and a whole variety of tactics to be employed.

The emphasis of *Battlemaster* is clearly on... er, battles. Your band of cheery warriors are ready and able to carry out your military manœuvres, be it to form a column, a phallanx (*Watch it. Ed.*), a wedge or a daisy chain. Their battle formation is arranged in accordance to your position, either front (brave) or rear (shandy). Different formations can vary the outcome of a battle. A good choice normally means a good win. For example a wedge formation will do well against a huddled group of lute-playing elves, but not so well against a battalion of 1000 fat, hungry orcs (or fat, hungry Germans for that matter). Anticipating enemy action and choosing your best reaction is the key to the game.

Macca: Okay, okay, so I'm a 'tad' cynical about this fantasy game lark, but frankly, I've played more *Lord Of The Rings* rip-offs than you've had hot women and they're all much of a muchness. *Battlemaster* has done a bit of a straddling act across the genre; it's quite a lot like other role-playing games (*Ultima VI, The Bards Tale* et al) but at the same time quite a lot different too.

Well, while *Battlemaster* retains the traditional aspects of slash 'n' romp goblin gnome games, (namely those intricate underground dungeons, whole menageries of beasties and lots of villages to open, doors to rape, damsels to pillage) it still keeps a foot in the combat department door.

The battle system is well thought out and comprehensive and luckily not completely rooted in real time. You can stop the action with a violent jab of the mouse button and pause to consider breathlessly your next option (if indeed you have a next option).

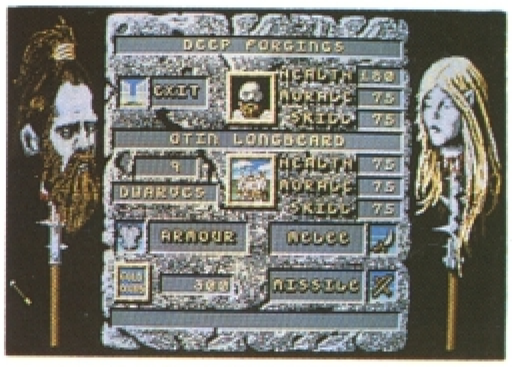
Brief skirmishes are fun on the whole until you attempt a large scale military operation against rival groups of the same race. Everything becomes very confusing, since there's no distinction between the graphics. So, all elves look the same, dwarves are dead ringers for each other – and the orcs, well, you could turn an orc on its head and it would look the same (but have a problem going to the 'lav'). Fights are generally messy affairs with you zapping all and sundry with your crossbow, while everybody else mêlées about. It's possible to loose half your armed forces in a scrap and not realise in the huge mass of bodies and explosions and moving sprites.



"It's just no good lads, we'll have to find a wider bridge!" (Orcs aren't known for their intelligence.)

HASSLE FACTOR 1
Long waits between games, but one disk and no inter-game nonsense.

And that seems to be the only problem with *Battlemaster*. The graphics are colourful and pretty. But the scenery, action and moving sprites are all squeezed into a small playing area. The radar helps a little but even that's pretty vague. Also, while you're pegging around the scenery, your men have an annoying tendency to flitter off and get caught behind rocks and trees, so you laboriously stop and wait for them to catch up.



Let me see now, that's two big Feasts a Cornetto and two heads on a stick.

Nevertheless, *Battlemaster* is one of those 'deep' games, that takes practice, experience and tenacity to 'open up'. Once you've mastered the fighting principle, the trading principle, the recruiting principle and the save-game principle, you can get on down and enjoy yourself. (I bet you thought I was going to quote a Janet Jackson song.)

THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	85
S	SOUND	50
A	ADDICTIVENESS	75
E	EXECUTION	80

• 20 • 40 • 60 • 80 • 100

Bright and colourful RPG, with the the emphasis on arcade battling rather than adventurous typing. Works quite well.

81



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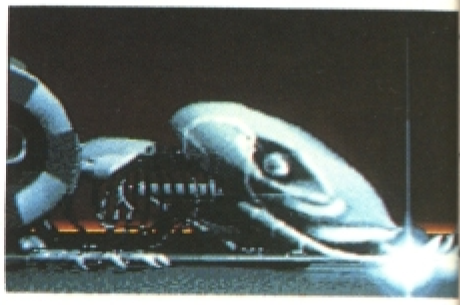
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The *Killing Game Show*'s introduction fits in with the new Psygnosis 'vogue' of film-like 'front-ends'. This is a close-up of the central character, squatting on the runway. It looks like a digitised photo, but the Psygnosis artists maintain, "We don't use digitisers."



UNDER WRAPS

KILLING GAME SHOW



The weapon power-ups are pretty standard fare – except for the 'Water-Freezer' which gives you extra time as it stops the irresistable rise of liquid.

***David McCandless* returns from Psygnosis' over-bright, over-airy software studio, clutching the Box Jellyfish, the small primed nuclear device and the tickets for three weeks at a Chilean health farm – prizes from his guest-spot on the *Killing Game Show*...**



This is the environment friendly level with lots of environment unfriendly weevils and laser-spitting bugs – all out to exterminate you.

WHAT'S WHAT	
TITLE	Killing Game Show
PUBLISHER	Psygnosis
PRICE	£24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	Sept/November

Just imagine if Bob Monkhouse congratulated you on winning *Full House*, saying, "Your prize is a red hot three-pronged spike up the bum." Frankly, it would be a bit of a turn around (not to mention a 'bend over'). And just imagine if Tarby hosted not *Winner Takes All* but *Winner Dies Quite Horribly*. And just imagine if Julian from Exeter University, on winning his fifth gold run, didn't get a set of *Blockbusters'* Cookery Books and a 'Can I have a pee please Bob?' T-shirt, but was ceremoniously electrocuted and BTAC (Burnt To A Crisp) instead.

If you think that was a bit of an oblong OTT sado-bestial look into the future of game shows (as we know them) then you should audition for a role in the new psychotic episode from Psygnosis, *Killing Game Show*. The setting is a huge cylinder, vertically placed, layered with a network of platforms and gaps. The idea is to reach the top, intact, without any of your body parts swimming in soy sauce.

This whole plan, cunning as it may seem, is hampered by the fact that you have no legs. Apart from the obvious advantages – namely no trouser shopping, an astounding ability to take ale and not get legless and, of course, being world limbo dancing champion (with resulting Gold margarine contract) – being a living exo-skeleton minus a few tibias is not a useful situation to be in when faced with a long bout of climbing and running away from aliens. Luckily, you have arms, and – boy! – what arms. These, coupled with a large rotating gun doobrie, set you up as one tough hombre (with an interesting party-piece involvi a jelly, three squirrels, and a sizeable length of 'limbo cord').

Out to annoy you are those spinnin rotating formations of aliens that now seem to be in every shoot 'em-up. The have the irritating ability to pass throu the scenery. So you might have found safe 'shandy corner' (a place surround by rocks and lemonade bottles) only to be submerged neck-deep in aliens. Another problem is time: the cylinder i slowly filling up with water and contac with this liquid is instantly fatal.

The action is all frenzy-packed joystick-snapping stuff. The scrolling screen is clogged with explosions and missiles and debris and body parts. Bu it's not all out laser warfare – you have keep a nodule of the old grey matter a the ready for the puzzles. They come i two forms: in-game, matching up door and different shaped keys, and end-of-level anagrams and visual puzzles, whi must be solved to progress.

Aside from being visually impressiv and a 'bit good' in the gameplay depar ment, *Killing Game Show* has a remar able smattering of original ideas. One



The first level, as you can see, is ver *Xenon II-ish* in style and alien look.

brilliant concept is the 'replay' feature. After dying, instead of shoving you bac to the beginning or to a 'flash point' buried somewhere in the level, the computer actually shows you a replay o your last life. Of course, you can sit the and giggle at all the cock-ups and panic attacks, but more usefully you can 'punch in' at any point of the replay and take over play from there. Brilliant. So with a clever bit of timing, you can take over just before the terrific boo-boo tha cost you your life (big smile).

Killing Game Show may be riddled with every shoot 'em-up cliché in the book (weapon power-ups, dumb flying aliens, scrolling levels, limbo champion but it has the brightest load of original ideas since Moses came along and said to his fellow slaves, "I know! Let's move to Israel."

STOP



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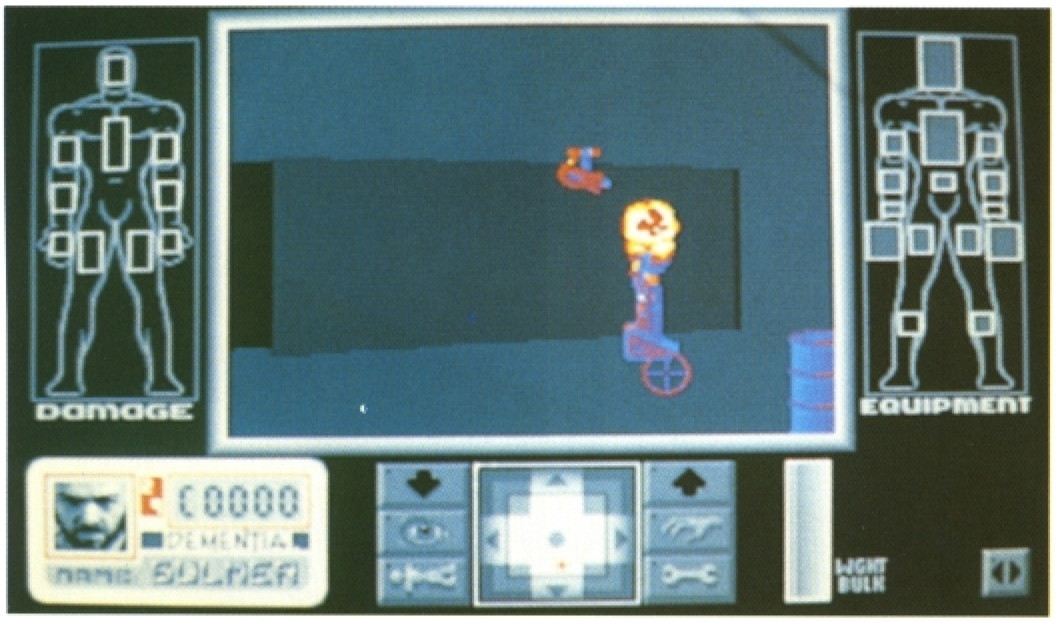


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CORPORATION



Oh... an absolutely remarkable shot. Straight to the head... the young droid just doesn't know what's hit him!

Core blimey, *Corporation* is finally here in all its 3D cell-animated glory. *David Wilson* gets set to explore the gloomy dark passages of big business (oo-er) *(Stop that now. Ed.)* in the promising first product from Derby-based Core Design...

ZERO HERO

Against a background of chilling music, the lightning from a passing storm crashes in the distance. The UCC building looms in the foreground and a reckless lone, female figure walks across the forecourt. Suddenly there's an instantaneous roar and a glimpse of a red-eyed, reptilian monster. A blood-curdling scream follows, then a smattering of blood!

This is the game's opening sequence and it ends with an assortment of newspaper banner headlines decrying another murder in the vicinity of the Corporation building. Enough is enough and the government decides to employ a covert agent to get to the bottom of these macabre goings-on... and guess who just drew the short straw at the Zodiac Agency?

You do get a choice, however, of agent to play. There's a selection of male, female, brawn or brain, human or robot, or you can even play yourself! Yep, there's a novel option for you to send Core a passport photo of your 'boat race' to be digitised into the game (as I've done, hem hem).

Next you'll need to 'tool up'. There is loads of equipment to choose from – various weapons, body armour, even exo-skeletons and bionic limb replacements! You can also opt to go on a course to hone your specialist skills.

From here you're into the game itself. Dropped onto the roof of the building, you've got eight rather large floors above ground and the same number underground to explore. Your objective is to pinch an embryo from a genetic experiment and between this and yourself are numerous human and robotic guards, security cameras, alarmed pressure mats, infra-red beam droids, locked doors, poison gas and no doubt something nastier (as the artwork and the opening sequence intimate!).

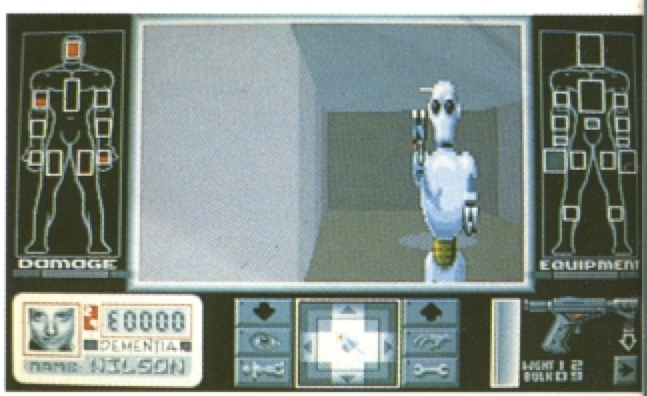
WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Corporation
PUBLISHER	Core Design
PRICE	ST/Amiga £24.99 PC £29.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	ST/Amiga: Out now PC: March 1991

AMIGA

David: *Corporation* is massive and within this environment you have complete 3D freedom. It's a bit like a cross between *Castle Master* and *Dungeon Master* in many respects but the movement and feel of the environment surpass the former, and the 3D graphics, sound and scope of gameplay out do the latter! There are numerous puzzles to be solved if you wish to progress and you also have to watch out for hidden traps such as infra-red alarm beams. These are visible if you have (and use) your Infra-Red viewer – but constant use drains your suit's power!

The whole game system has been intricately worked out by programmers Bill Allen and Kevin Bulmer in a fashion akin to a true D&D role player. Your character has a selection of attribute values (Dexterity, Intelligence, Endurance etc.) which reflect his performance. Similarly, your character has points for energy (which you expend as the day goes on – they can be replenished by sleep, stimulant drinks or pills) and 'Psionic' energy (which the devious devils don't tell you how to use). You also have damage levels for different parts of your body – take full hits on your head (or bod) and you're dead meat, a certain percentage and your vision starts failing(!), damage a hand and you risk dropping objects (like guns in the middle of a fight!) and hurt a leg and you see yourself physically 'limp' on screen!



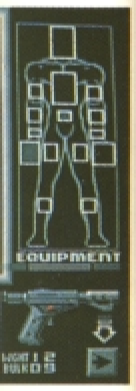
Maintenance droids are generally unaggressive. However obstruct them (or take the piss out of their 'shades') and you can expect a metallic clip round the ear 'ole!

Sound too has been imaginatively done, but you most benefit with a stereo monitor. You hear the direction of

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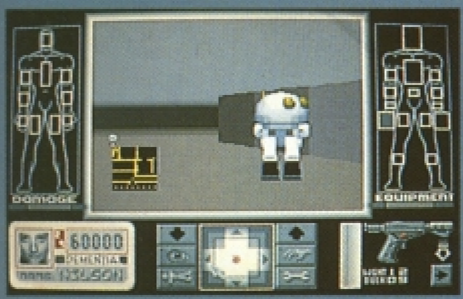
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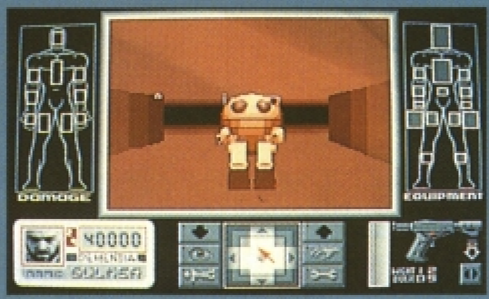
A ROOM WITH SEVERAL VIEWS



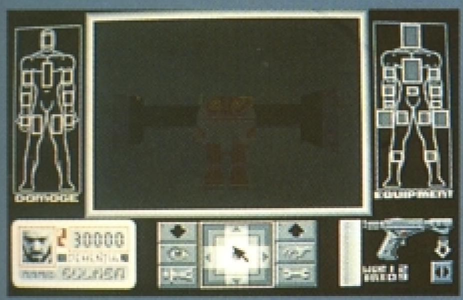
Ah, that's better. This is a thermal view of the beast.



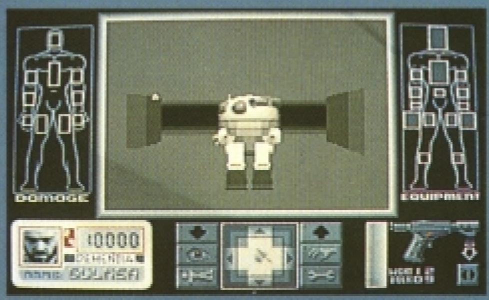
Here's a view of the opening level. There's my Head Up Display and.. blimey! There's a big robot!



Variety is the spice of life. Let's try an Infra-Red view. IR alarm beams will show up in this mode.



Let's turn the lights out. Coo! It's a bit dark. (And although humans can't see, the robots can, you clot!)



Last but not least, this is my image intensifier. Moving beasties are very prominent in this mode. Hurrah!



1. Damage shows up here.
2. Your exhaustion meter. If it fills up, you're advised to find a safe place to take forty winks!
3. Smart card. Provides security clearance but will constantly need upgrading.
4. This lets you squat/crawl.
5. This lets you look around (for objects on the floor, on doors...).
6. This lets you sleep to regain energy and Psionic powers.
7. Your very comprehensive, easy to operate (but tricky to explain) movement control icon.
8. Stand or Jump.
9. Manipulate.
10. Repair.
11. Meter for repairing broken things.
12. A cross here shows item is damaged.
13. This is a rating for the Bulkiness of items.
14. This is a rating for the Weightiness of items.
15. Toggles through objects (if there are more than one object in a pocket for example).
16. Item selected from pocket or spotted on the floor. Your cursor becomes a hand with which to pick up these items and place them in your suit.
17. This allows you to drop items.
18. This meter shows your level of encumbrance. You can actually carry lots, but overdo it and your movement and energy will suffer.
19. This is your suit and place to carry things. It comes complete with some items such as compass and power lead.
20. Pockets.



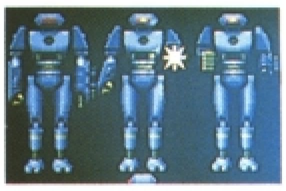
A gun in the hand...

footsteps, you can differentiate between robots and humanoids and also gauge the distance from the noise. Set off the alarms and you hear sirens and see flashing lights. Do this in a room and the doors lock and you hear the ominous hiss of gas being pumped into the room (this is when you wish you'd bought that gas mask). Ho hum, by the way, if you don't 'buy' things you can also find them inexplicably deposited on the floor (obviously the cleaning up droids aren't as efficient as the light fixing droids).

As I said, *Corporation* is massive, but it's also a very friendly program. The code for the different levels boots up as you ride the lift towards them (to minimise disk accessing). The game has been compressed onto one disk on Amiga (two on ST) and supports both 512K and 1 Meg machines. The latter has more enemies etc. but all the gameplay and sound is in both (so everyone can hear the human guards' digitised shouts!). Oh, and there's a save game option too!

HASSLE FACTOR: 0
So much program, so little disk (one in fact).

Inevitably, to cope with such a large project, there have been concessions to save on memory. There are no female guards as originally planned, objects on the floor all appear to be housed in metal domes and when you kill things (with the exception of chairs, tables, cameras, etc.) the bodies disappear. Still, in the light of the speed and fluidity of the 3D gameplay, the scale of the play area, the four viewing modes and the quality of the graphics, Core Design's first product on its own label gets a hearty ZERO thumbs up!



Three's a crowd...

THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	89
S	SOUND	92
A	ADDICTIVENESS	91
E	EXECUTION	91

20 · 40 · 60 · 80 · 100

To use a popular cliché if you liked *Dungeon Master*, you'll lurve this. Very atmospheric game with imaginative use of sound and graphics.

93

STOP

VENUS

Dee Dee Doo Doo Daa Daa Goddess on a mountain top... Dee dee doo daa... Bananarama, eh? They're a pile of old jobs and no mistake. Not very inspired and not very original. Neither of which can be said of Gremlin's new title *Venus*. *David Wilson* undid his flies and was subsequently arrested, but not before he penned this review of Gremlin's metal fly masterpiece.



Oops, that was a bit of a pig's burp! I've wasted one of my 484 valuable four way shots.

Venus the goddess of lurve, a planet, a Bananarama record and a plant that prays on flies. No prizes for guessing which inspired the title of Gremlin's new game. You lot should be fairly familiar with this little number already, what with ZERO giving you a free playable demo of a couple of levels way back on our May issue. Basically – as the story board intro reminds you each time you boot up, mankind has managed to duff up practically all of insect life on the planet Earth. Always happy to make a drama out of a crisis, man then creates a race of robotic insects to redress the eco-balance. For some reason that escapes me for the moment, most of these mutate into a horrid species of killer insects, thus provoking man to imitate nature once again in creating a predator, a sort of super fly.

Anyway, you get tc play this self same fly in ten five-level 'worlds' (that's 50 levels to you and me, oh and one 'bonus' level per world) of graphically appealing, horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up. There are numerous killer insects to cope with from the terminally crap to the downright dangerous. As you'd expect the difficulty progresses through the 50 levels and in these latter stages the various icons that enable you to perform 'super jumps' and 'ceiling walks' are much more in evidence, whilst the extra ammo and super weapons are far fewer. You'd be best advised to know your icons so you can put them to good use and avoid the red herrings. (Using a 'ceiling walk' icon when there ain't no ceiling can be rather hazardous to your health!) Talking of which, ceiling walking adds a novel twist to gameplay as you'll have to play upside down. (ZERO helpful tip: why not get a chum to turn your monitor/telly upside down each time you encounter one of these sequences?)

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Venus
PUBLISHER	Gremlin
PRICE	£19.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	Out now



No time to admire the luverly scenery as nasties keep you constantly 'on the hop'.

AMIGA

David: I probably won't need to remind you of just how nice *Venus* looks. I mean we gave you a free demo and many of you have commented to this effect in your letters. You should be aware then that *Venus* also plays well and requires a bit of 'strategy' as you figure out how the different icons can be utilised to your advantage in various situations. Most beasties you kill will leave metal pods behind which you can shoot to reveal bonus extras. Some unleash a little heart with wings that flutters skywards (you'll have to move quickly to catch these, but it's worth doing for extra life/energy).

HASSLE FACTOR: 1
Lengthy opening slideshow to sit through each time, but few inter-game interruptions.

On the earlier levels you'll find more ammo and super weapons, whilst on the later levels it's mainly extra points and the occasional time bonus. Best to stock up then on the earlier levels! At the end of each 'world' you'll have a bonus level. All nine of these look exactly the same I'm afraid and basically entail you facing zillions of various insects. Some are indestructable and need avoiding, others can be shot to produce bonus icons. Collect as many as you can to replenish your stocks before you venture into the next world! The further into the game you go the more difficult it becomes, the enemies become tougher and start firing back, and the puzzles and pitfalls become that much harder. Reach a new level and you'll be given a password so you can bypass earlier levels in future (and miss out on the weapons and ammo!). As a result of this I found that the earlier levels lacked pace and challenge. However as you progress, both these factors increase and by then you're hooked. Not the best shoot 'em up I've seen, but an imaginative and original offering that looks very appealing and requires some thought as well as joystick skills.



Oooh! I've gone all upside down! Now if I can quickly stand on my head I'll have no probs.

GRAPHICS	86	ADDICTIVENESS	88
SOUND	85	EXECUTION	89

OVERALL 88

STOP

review

SUPREMACY

ZERO HERO

We're beginning to worry about *Paul Lakin*. After being elected ZERO Milk *and* Door Monitor in the same week, the power rather went to his head and he kept rushing off to the games room to play *Supremacy*...

What a shame everybody has to be so ambitious. Just imagine a world in which you were the only person who wanted more out of life than a hap'orth of chips and a quick fumble in the back seat at the Roxy. There would be nothing standing between you and complete world domination. Sadly once you start trying to rule the world you find about 8 million other people trying to do exactly the same thing. Fortunately by the beginning of *Supremacy* you have already managed to gain control of your own planet and rule it as a benevolent... well fairly benevolent... alright, a really rather brutal dictator. Now there's a whole universe out there just begging to be colonised. Unfortunately there are four alien dictators out there hell bent on exactly the same objective as you (the four different aliens represent four different levels of the game). Between you lie a number of lifeless planets and the aim of the game is to colonise them. Eventually you aim to arrive at your opponent's home planet...



WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Supremacy
PUBLISHER	Virgin Mastertronic
PRICE	£29.99 ST/Amiga £34.99 PC
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	ST/Amiga: September PC: October

1 THE STAR SYSTEM. Your enemy's face in the window means things aren't going too well.

2 ICONS to access other screens such as combat, economy etc.

3 ARROWS to move you through the planets in the system.

4 A PICTURE POSTCARD of your current location.



5 PAUSE to catch a breath. Watch an episode of *Neighbours*. Right. Off we go again.

6 SOUND CONTROL – so you can listen to Kylie and Jason instead.

7 NEWS SCREEN lets you know what's going on in the system.

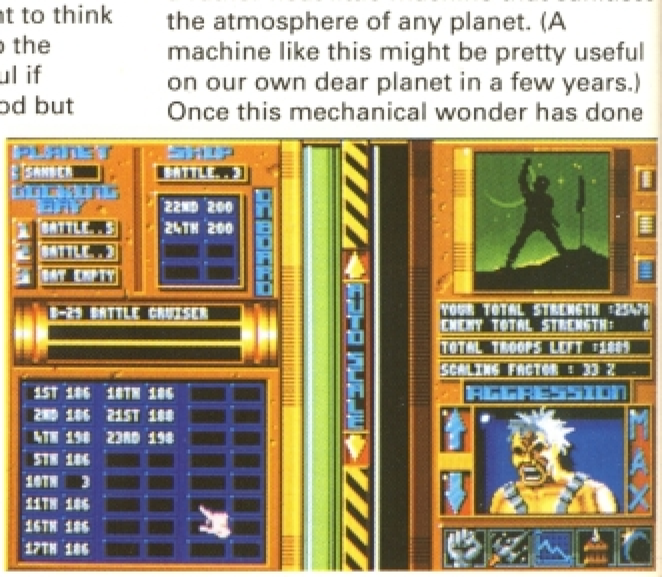
8 PLANET NAME. in this case, erm, Gber. (Are you sure that's not a spelling mistake?)

The basis of any success is your base. (So to speak) This is Starbase, the only place where you can buy goods and raise armies. It is also, for much of the game, your major scource of income and manpower. Therefore a lot of attention has to be paid to keeping the home fires burning.

Your key method of control is taxation. Now any dictator worth his salt likes nothing better than to bleed his population dry with a bit of crippling taxation. However it's important to think before you tax. High taxes keep the population down which is useful if you're running a bit short of food but this will reduce your tax revenue eventually. Also if your population is declining, then where are you going to get your soldiers from?

However let's be generous and assume that you've got your economy ticking over nicely, there's enough food and fuel for all, plenty of dosh in the kitty, population level is fairly steady and everyone is happy. (Except Mrs Nesbitt but then she's never really been happy since she had all those problems with her gall bladder.) Now what? Well, now your eyes turn heavenwards, you look at the planets twinkling in the sky (and they really do twinkle, they're very proud of that at Virgin!) and you think to yourself "Ooh I quite fancy a few of those."

Assuming your arch rival hasn't already got his ugly little hands on them then non of the planets in the system are inhabitable. So the first step for any budding Galactic Emperor is to invest in a rather neat little machine that sanitises the atmosphere of any planet. (A machine like this might be pretty useful on our own dear planet in a few years.) Once this mechanical wonder has done



Your soldier's aggression shows in his hairdo!

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF BADDIES

ALGERNON THE ALIEN



Despite failing his GCSE in marauding, young Algy's early career has been fairly promising. Sadly the possession of only two brain cells (and one of those on loan from an Aunty Ethel in the Blackpool Nebula) has rather hampered him in his rise to arch villain status.

ROD THE SLOB



After bit parts in *Star Trek, Dr Who* and *Neighbours,* Rod decided to try the real thing. His military conquests were succesful but his attempt to turn an entire solar system into an Advanced Drama Studio bankrupted the economy. Rod can now be seen as reserve host on *Take Over Bid.*

ANONY MOUSE



Remarkably successful, yet completely unknown interplanetary dictator, Anony conquered half the universe before commiting suicide on discovering that his mum couldn't remember his name.



MR J. SMITH

Despite his 'normal' name Mr Smith is actually the most powerful and evil being in the universe. So we wouldn't dare to print anything about him, not even his name... oh, bugger.

its stuff then it's time to colonise. Before you know where you are you'll have troop ships, agriculture stations and mining gear whizzing between the two planets. And soon two could become three and three become....but wait, life's never that easy.

The biggest obstacle between you and success is the alien. Depending which alien you choose he'll either be a strategic genius, pretty damn cunning, rather slow or frankly a bit thick. Whatever his I.Q. level he'll have his heart set on one thing and that's wiping you out of existence. He too will be colonising planets. He'll also be launching sorties against planets you already own. This is the sort of guy whose idea of a fun night out is to turn up at your Starbase and annihilate everyone on it. Exciting maybe but also a tadge anti-social.

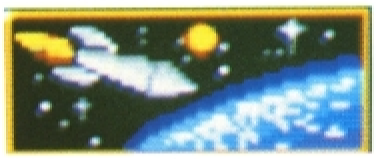
As well as aliens there are also natural disasters to contend with. The sort of thing Insurance Companies describe as an Act of God. Like all your agriculture stations being afflicted by a plant virus, or an entire planet being destroyed by a meteorite.

While you're sorting out all these problems on some far flung colony you may suddenly realise that you've forgotten to reduce the, ahem, temporary emergency tax levels on Starbase. By now the population's probably upped and left for a tax haven on Alpha Cenjersey.

If this is what it takes to be dictator then perhaps the back row of the Roxy's not such a bad prospect after all. Not that many people have been zapped by aliens while watching *Casablanca.*



Ooh go on, buy me one of those. *Pleeeease...*



"Wheeeeeee!!!!"

Paul: All that glitters is not gold, all that's violent is not exciting and all that's complex is not necessarily mind numbingly dull. All of which is a slightly cack-handed way of saying that although *Supremacy* is extremely complex, it's also very straightforward and above all completely gripping.

Imagine playing *Sim City* with all the options (including the monster) switched on. Eek! Then imagine that instead of just one city you're controlling loads and looking to take on more. Imagine that and you'll be some way to imagining *Supremacy.*



Excuse me, have you got this in a size 14?

Considering that this is, at heart, an icon driven strategy game the screens are really atmospheric. In the corner of the combat control screen there are animated sequences displaying conflict or conquest. The various ships and goods that you can buy are beautifully drawn.

One of the other impressive aspects of this game is the variety in pace. There are times of steady progress where you move calmly from one stage to the next. There are times when you sit back, take stock and wait for resources to build up. There are also times of complete panic and mayhem when, for example, you receive a message that one of your planets is about to be wiped out by a meteorite. Cheers.

As you progress through the levels, your opponents get tougher, planetry systems bigger and the game more complex. However, the complexity never overshadows the playability. This is a real edge-of-your-seat strategy game and you don't get many of those.

Hassle Factor: 0
No disk swopping once the game's underway.

THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	90
S	SOUND	87
A	ADDICTIVENESS	90
E	EXECUTION	92

20 • 40 • 60 • 80 • 100

A brilliant strategy game that gets both your brain and your pulse working overtime.

91

STOP

review

EXTASE

Oh dear, yet another game review requiring a brain. *Paul's* too busy designing flags. *David's* stuck underneath his Triumph Herald. *Macca's* 'on the inside'. *Duncan* is, erm... That leaves *Tim*. Oh well, it'll just have to be a crap review...



I'M (UP TO MY NECK) IN EXTASE

1 **CURSOR.** You use this to grab and deposit fuses, knobble sparks and send your 'doofer' into the circuit.
2 **THE ANDROID.** You have to direct your electric charges to the terminals in her head to win the level. Her expression changes depending on what's happening.
3 **BASE CHIP.** This is where your electric charges enter the circuit at regular intervals.
4 **INLET.** When the gate is open (red) your doofer can enter the circuit through one of these if you click on it with the cursor.
5 **VIRUS SPARK.** Whenever you enter the circuit or do something to it, a nasty spark arrives and starts cruising around, eating fuses and knobbling your doofer.
6 **VIRUS NEST.** Home to the above.
7 **FUSE.** If this is missing neither you nor an electric charge can pass through.
8 **FUSE FACTORY.** Makes fuses for you or your opponent (depending who gets there first).
9 **SHUNT.** Click on this to change the direction an electric charge, your doofer or a virus spark can take.

She's a bit of a 'stunna', this android. According to the manual, '*Extase* is the answer to your dreams'. Wow! Top shelf stuff! Erm, well perhaps we're getting a bit over-excited there. The whole idea is to activate a 'droid by awakening her vital mental processes – represented by the eight levels of *Extase*. Unfortunately, if your opponent (either human or computer) manages to do it first, you're out of the running – and mechanical naughties are out the window.

The main game screen consists of two identical circuits leading to the android's brain – one of them yours, the other that of your opponent. Your eventual task on each level is to guide the electric charges which exit regularly from the chips at the bottom of the screen through the maze to the brain at the top. To do this, you first have to enter the maze and clean the circuit lines so current can flow through them. Clean lines show up as red. This task is hindered by missing fuses (which have to be replaced) and virus sparks which cruise round the system generally causing trouble.

If you divert an electric charge into the fuse factory using a 'shunt', this allows you to create new fuses. Handy when they keep disappearing. Oh, and I forgot. Your opponent can steal fuses off you and generally fiddle with your circuit – and you can do the same back.

AMIGA

Tim: By now you should be completely baffled. If not, you're probably the programmer's brother-in-law – who can't read this anyway 'cos he's probably French. It might help if we talk through the first level.

The game starts. My circuit's blank. Need to make the pathways red (ie 'clean'). Click the cursor over the inlet and guide the 'doofer' round the circuit using the mouse, turning the lines red as I go. Oh dear, a virus spark got me. Try again. This time I run into a dead end – a fuse is missing. Click on the bottom shunt to redirect an electric charge to the fuse factory. Boom, pick up the fuse, deposit it in its socket. Click on the inlet again to enter the circuit, guide the doofer through to the brain. Hoorah! All red!

HASSLE FACTOR: 2
Fiddly control system.

Unfortunately, my opponent has nicked some of my fuses while I was guiding the doofer about. The electric charge is blocked. Time to make some more fuses, steal some of his, etc. etc...

Clearer? No? *(Sigh.)* Look, it's impossible to explain, but *Extase* is easy to get into, you'll just have to take our word for it. It's full of neat ideas – for example, the android's face is fully animated during play, coming up with some weird expressions as the action hots up. But best of all is the in-game sound – which responds 'intelligently' to what's happening in the android's brain. In glorious stereo, it adds a whole new dimension to the game.

Extase is a promising first release from French label Cryo, with a distinctly Gallic flavour... STOP

GRAPHICS 81	ADDICTIVENESS 79	SOUND 95	EXECUTION 75

OVERALL 80



Seems a lot of effort just to make my hair grow back.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Extase
PUBLISHER	Cryo/Virgin
PRICE	ST/Amiga £19.99 PC £24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	September

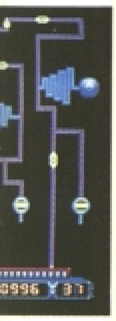
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review

LAST NINJA II

Paul Lakin is no stranger to danger – they once met at an 'absolutely charming' cocktail party – so he seemed the ideal person to risk life and limb in *Last Ninja II*.



Ah those delightful backstage days with all my fellow thespians. No dear, I said thespians.

A Ninja's training prepares him for many things. It prepares him for fearful combat against a host of enemies. It prepares him for feats of death defying athletics. However there are gaps in the training – most Ninjas are not fully prepared for those times when the tea bag splits in the cup. They are even less prepared for being transported from ancient Japan into the heart of present day New York. Just goes to show that Ninjas would make lousy Cub Scouts.

Having arrived in the hamburger zone Armakuni, the Ninja must deal with puzzles and baddies if he is to get back to his peaceful island retreat of Lin Fen. Along the way he can pick up a fairly fearsome assortment of weapons in an assortment of strange places – there are rich pickings in the Ladies' loo.

WHAT'S WHAT

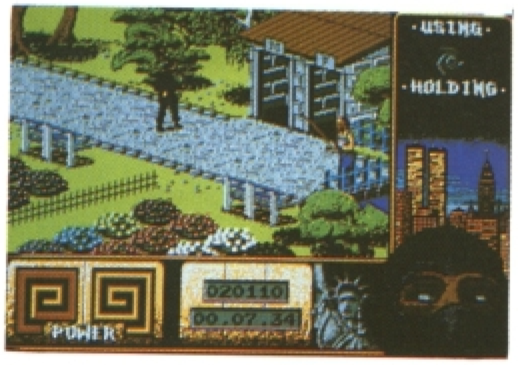
TITLE	Last Ninja II
PUBLISHER	Activision/System 3
PRICE	£24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	Out now

ST

Paul: In last month's *Kick Off II* write up Dunc did a two part review. Part one was for people who'd never played the original *Kick Off*, part two was for those who had. Well as the saying goes: "If it works, crib it" so here's another two parter. Those of you who played the original *Kick Off*... no, hang on, that's not right... those of you who played *Last Ninja II* in its 8-bit form can skip the first part of the review whereas the rest of you have to read the whole thing. (Unless of course you hate computer games anyway, in which case you can miss out the whole review section and go straight through to *Yikes!*.)

Last Ninja II (How can you have a second last ninja?) was a huge hit on 8-bit market a couple of years ago. In those days the market was so full of Ninja games there was barely room to sling a shuriken, yet *Last Ninja II* more than held its own.

There were probably two reasons for this. (Or three if you include the out and out luck which influences the fortunes of games both good and bad.) Firstly the action takes place on a wide landscape – each of the six levels contains enough interconnected screens to make it a mapper's paradise – secondly there is more to do than just hit things. Although there are plenty of people to hit, and plenty of things to hit them with, there's a lot more to it than that. Every screen has at least one object to find and probably a puzzle to solve as well. *Last Ninja II* is crying out to be mapped, tipped and played.



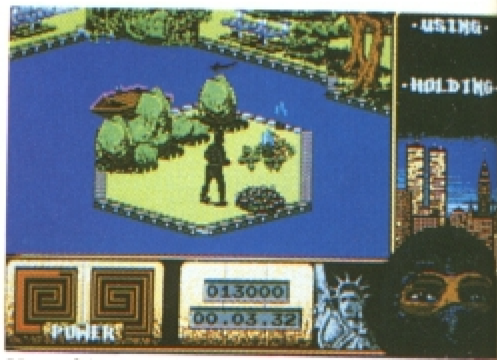
Well, I'm definitely not going into those loos until someone fits a door with a sensible lock.



It's not that I'm paranoid or anything, you understand, but why is that man juggling flick knives?.



"Jump the river using the boat." Hmm, I've a feeling this isn't going to be all that easy.



Now it's time I was rational about this. I got onto this island, so I must be able to get off.

The problem is, of course, that all these things have already been done on 8-bit. (Ah yes, the rest of you can start reading now.) Despite the passing of two years since its original appearance the game has changed not one whit. Nothing wrong with that but it is something of a missed opportunity. Surely by now a lot of the original fans of the game will have upgraded to an ST or Amiga and would have been keen to buy a new version of an old favourite. Ho hum.

The screens are detailed enough and the ninja moves round them in three dimensions. Unfortunately to achieve this, all joystick moves are relative to the ninja's position on the screen. To describe this as irritating is a bit like describing the House of Lords as middle-aged. Trying to line up on an opponent you want to hit or an object you want to pick up can take yonks. You eventually get used to it but it's a bit of a fiddle. *(I'm sorry? Ed.)*

Full of addictive puzzles and violent action, *Last Ninja II* is a good game on 16-bit. However, it's not the great game it was on 8-bit. Perhaps it's just showing its age. STOP

GRAPHICS	83	ADDICTIVENESS	87
SOUND	78	EXECUTION	78

OVERALL 79

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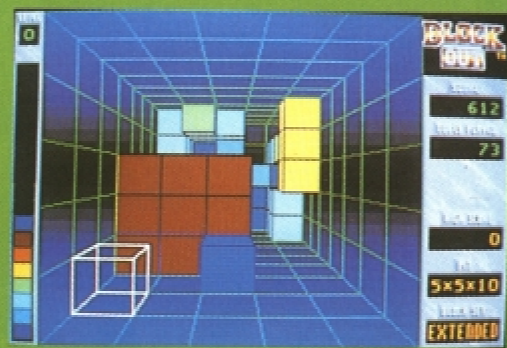
BLOCKOUT



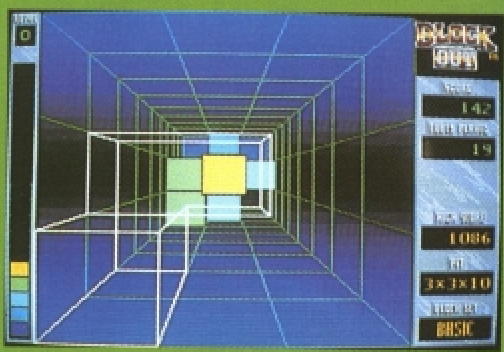
***Tetris* certainly has a lot to answer for, it's the game that launched a squillion clones. Here's the latest, it's called *Blockout* and it comes from German publishers, Rainbow Arts. We gave the task of reviewing it to *David Wilson*, the new kid on the *Blockout* (*Don't you mean 'oldest' kid? Ed.*)**

There's been zillions of puzzle games and, furthermore, as many again spawned by the original and arguably best of the bunch, *Tetris*. Now here's Rainbow Arts' contribution to the genre – *Blockout*. It has nothing whatsoever to do with *Breakout* and, without beating about the bush, it's 3D viewed-from-above *Tetris*. In a bid to 'be different' the game features three versions of this game and also an Editor that allows you to alter all the various parameters. You can adjust the size of the playing grid (in terms of depth, as well as length/width), you can increase the speed at which you rotate the pieces and then the choice of game type. You can choose from the three pre-set games or after you've adjusted all the parameters, you can then save this as a new preset to a file on the game disk.

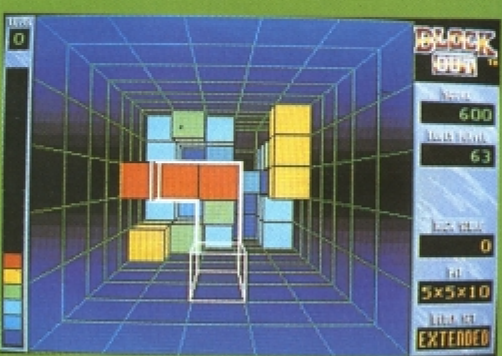
THE PRESET GAMES



1 The basic game is dubbed 'Flat Fun'. Here you have quite a large deep grid. The pieces are all flat (ie they don't have lumpy bits sticking out of the top and bottom) and you seem to have loads of time to turn the pieces through every conceivable angle as they slowly descend.



2 3D Mania is basically the same as the above, except the grid has become much smaller and the pieces are bigger and more awkward shapes. You may have already guessed that they are also more complex 3D shapes (ie they have got lumpy bits sticking out of the top and bottom as well as the sides).



3 Out Of Control – which erm, is a tad self-explanatory. Basically the computer bungs all the most awkward shapes it can think of, (with all the sticky out lumpy bits) in the trickiest possible order, at you – and that's just on the easiest of the ten difficulty levels!

AMIGA

David: Oh no! It's another *Tetris* game. Still I suppose it does try to offer new variations on a theme, but at the same time has enough of the original to still be a very playable game. It is basically *Tetris* viewed from above, and this viewpoint whilst bringing a new slant to gameplay, has both positive and negative points. Where the game has tried to be innovative is in the 3D shapes which you can rotate clockwise or anticlockwise about their x, y, or z axis as they fall – in other words any permutation is possible – and also in the inclusion of an Editor that lets you play one of three preset games or alter all the parameters therein and save the new configuration as a new preset. Pieces appear as line graphics and when set in place they fill in colour – different colours indicate different levels. With the most complex shapes as you rotate them it becomes very confusing to see exactly what's going on.

HASSLE FACTOR: 0
Only one disk. Lack of Originalty factor 9.

Basically, *Blockout* is a good little game, though largely devoid of originality. The problem lies in the fact that although there are ten difficulty levels, each individual game doesn't get progressively harder. Pieces fall at the same speed etcetera. In effect it's a war of attrition – you keep on till you get so tired that you make a mistake. Another good variation on the *Tetris* idea, but a rip-off nevertheless. If you can't get enough of *Tetris*, and its numerous clones, then you'll probably love *Blockout* (though it's not as good) but I wonder how long these games will continue to flourish? STOP

GRAPHICS	75	ADDICTIVENESS	85
SOUND	60	EXECUTION	70

OVERALL 78

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Blockout
PUBLISHER	Rainbow Arts
PRICE	£19.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	Out now

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STOP

OVERALL
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- Philips Television Tuner for 8833 Monitor (shown)
  (Converts the monitor into a Television. Also works on Commodore 1084)
- Cumana External 3.5" 880K Disk Drive (shown)
- Amiga A501 Ram Upgrade to 1 meg (genuine item with clock)
- Zydec Amiga Ram upgrade to 1 Meg with clock
- Monitor Stand, wire frame, allows access to drive (shown)

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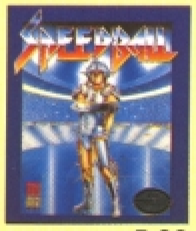
Bottom Row

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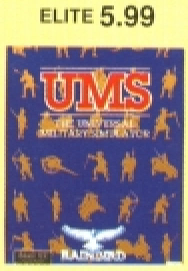
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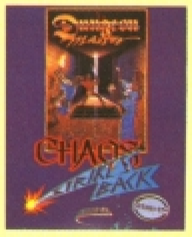
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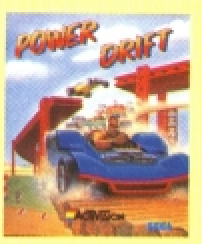
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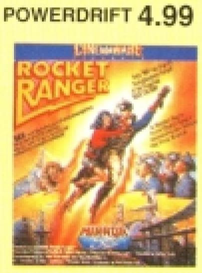
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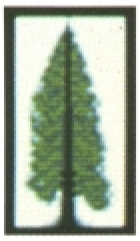


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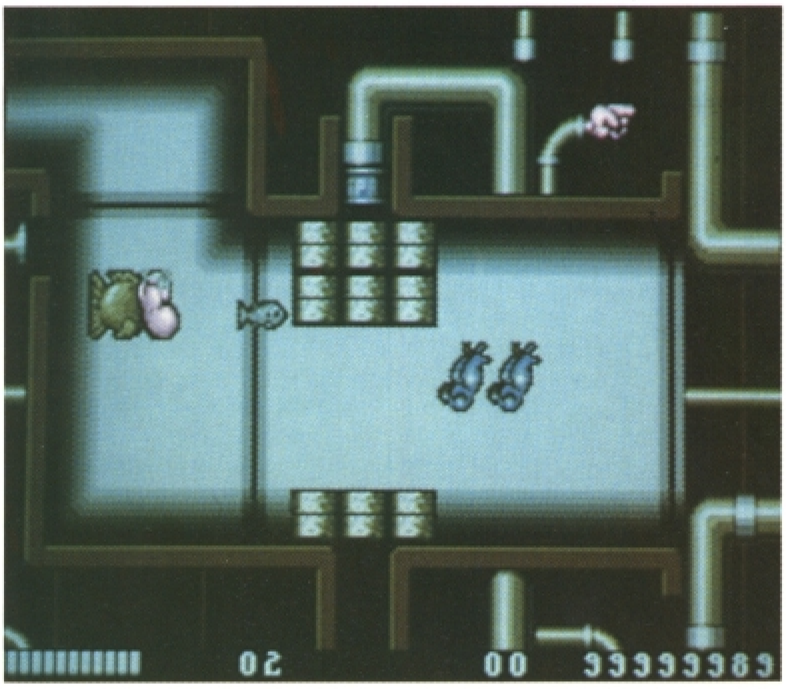
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MONTY PYTHON



And Now For Something Completely different... Er... honest. It's Virgin's *Monty Python* game and despite *David Wilson's* trepidation – he didn't expect great things, you see – he was actually rather pleased with what he found. "Yep, I'm a lumberjack and I'm okay..." *(Shut up. Ed.)*



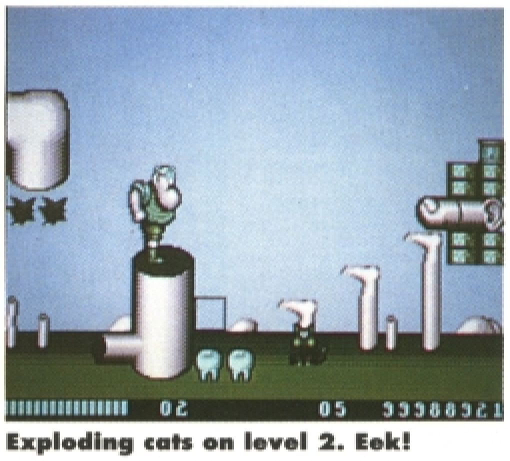
The Gumby Fish has to shoot the cheeses, figure out how to get the spam to drop whilst avoiding the dead parrots!

It seems as if *Monty Python* has been around for ages now. What was once a radical alternative to conventional comedy has since been absorbed into the popular culture to be replaced by even more outrageous 'alternative' comedy. A recent reshowing of a *Python* 'best of' series met with mixed reactions. Some felt it had dated, but by and large much of the original spark of original humour remained. So what then of the computer game? Could it tap into the vein of brilliance that was *Python* at it's best? Read on and I'll tell you...

The game enables you to take the (undesirable) role of Arthur Gumby in the quest for his brains. It opens with an animated sequence where a mechanical hand removes his knotted handkerchief and you see the four little pieces of cerebellum hopping out and off screen! You first walk across a plain avoiding several falling 16 ton weights whilst being pursued by a hedge (on legs). From here (having been told how to recognise the larch) you enter another animated sequence where your head is pulled off and stuck onto a fish body. You'll then play level one in this incarnation. From the word go you'll realise this isn't going to be a run of the mill computer game!

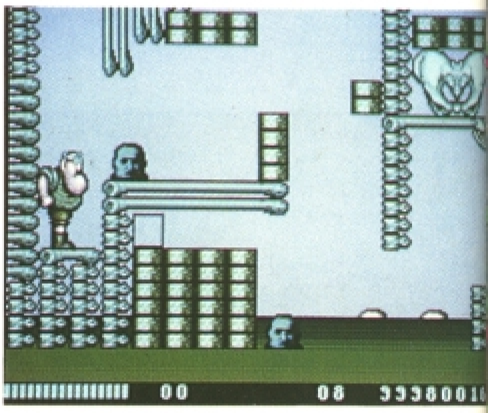
WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Monty Python
PUBLISHER	Virgin
PRICE	£19.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	September



Exploding cats on level 2. Eek!

David: Didn't you jus[t] hate it when all your fifth year school chum[s] used to take every available opportunity to repeat to each other (in rather unconvincin[g] John Cleese voices) all the various *Python* classic sketches? I mean the parrot sketch was all very funny on telly the first time around but in the playground for the 340th time the humour element had 'paled somewhat'. With this phobia then of 'Python bores' I was a tad wary of looking at this Virgin licence. Oh no, not loads of abysmal sub-games wit[h] cheese shops and lumberjacks.



Look out for the really horrid squelchy heads!

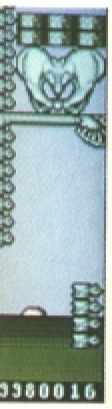
In fact, I was very, very pleasantly surprised. Virgin contracted the development out to Core Design and (ye[s] again) the Derby based coders have come up trumps. Instead of the too-oft repeated words and gesticulations, the game mainly centres on the brilliant surreal cartoons of Terry Gilliam. Of course there is a homage to the classics some of the 'bad guys' are represented by dead Norwegian blue parrots, you collect tins and spam for extra energy, the protection system tests your cheese recognition skills and gameplay is interrupted throughout with sequences such as 'How To Recognise Trees From A Long Way Away' etc. There just seems to be so much in it and because everything is so bizarre, there are many puzzles and surprises in store. Although the pointy hands show you which direction to take, there are invisible bonus windows to smash(!) and hidden bonus rooms. Each time I played seemed to find more little touches. Er... so much so that I'm going back for another go... And now... the conclusion: What we have here is a brilliantly origina[l] and witty interpretation of the *Python* theme and the horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up.

HASSLE FACTOR: 0
One disk, no hassle. Get fed up with the cartoons and you can click through them or turn them off completely.

GRAPHICS	89	ADDICTIVENESS	90
SOUND	88	EXECUTION	90

OVERALL 89

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STOP

OVERALL
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RIO DE JANEIRO 2019.

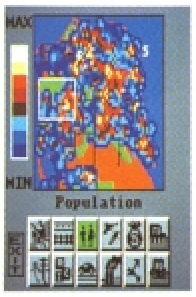
SIM CITY

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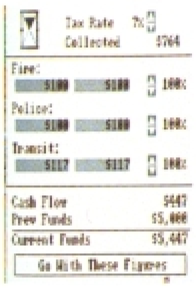
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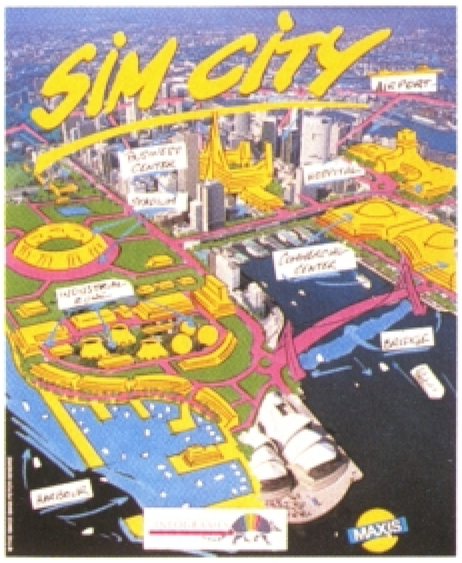


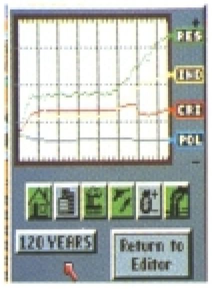


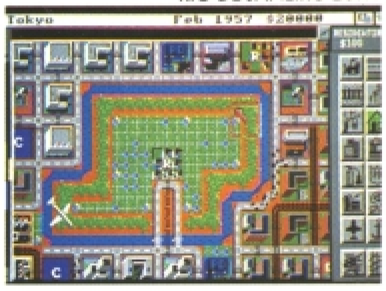
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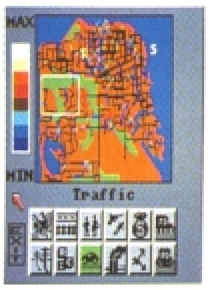








time. Every decision instantly influences the life of your town.
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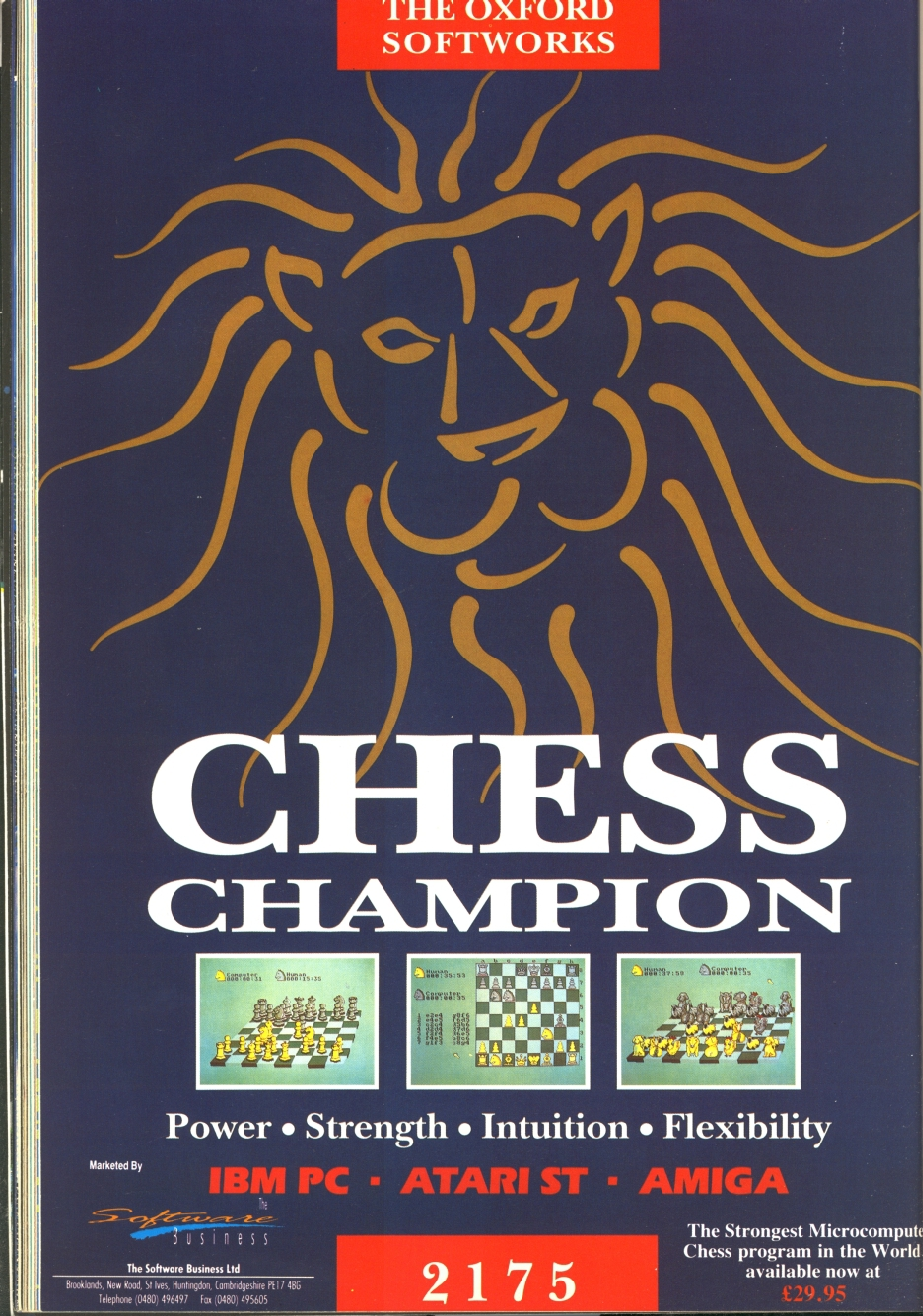




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INFOWORLD Volume II Issue 20 : "People playing Sim City are completely plugged into the world they create, disappearing for hours."
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BAD BLOOD

Blood, eh? There's all sorts of the stuff. There's blue blood, good blood, red blood and orange blood. *(Don't you mean blood oranges? Ed.)* And now there's *Bad Blood*, the latest game from Origin Systems. We kneed *Duncan MacDonald* in the face to help him produce some nose blood and sat him down in the corner of the room...





Now come on you horrible load of mutants, which one of you broke the window?

If you were a mutant and you lived in a town called Mardok (which was surrounded by other towns called Nivvik, Okkarn and Xantinium) then you might well come to the conclusion that you were a character in an arcade adventure. And you'd be right. *Bad Blood* is indeed an arcade adventure – here's how the story goes...

"In times past a fire weapon (i.e. an atomic bomb) was used on the land, leaving a desert of contamination. However, some folk survived, although their children and their children's children inherited genes that were tainted by the fire sickness (i.e radiation). Towns grew from the desert sand and the natives sustained a meagre existence. Surrounding these ramshackle mutant towns were large cities populated by humans who had not been subjected to the fire sickness of times past. These humans preyed on the mutants, capturing many and taking them away to lead the lives of slaves. However, word was about that the humans were planning to launch a full scale war on the mutant towns, killing, raping and pillaging as they went."

You, basically, have to stop the forthcoming massacre. You can choose to play one of three characters. Varigg's the strongest but can't pass for a human (he's got green skin, you see); Jakka's a chick who looks human but has a mutant eye (which she covers with a patch) while Dekker actually is a human so he can visit the cities undetected (but he hasn't yet proved himself as a warrior). Choose one of these and it's overhead view time. Using the joystick or keyboard you move your character around the landscape (initially you start in a mutant town called Mardok). Houses can be entered and things can be picked up on contact (extra weapons, food and suchlike).

Other mutants abound in the towns and you can have intercourse with them – verbal intercourse that is. You do this by pressing the 'T' key, whereupon a menu pops up. Highlighting "Start Chit-Chat" does just what you'd expect – you start chatting about banalities such as the weather or the quality of the drinking water. From the response you get, you soon learn to tell if the person you're talking to has any useful information to unload. If they have go to "Talk About", to highlight specific questions and get the related answer. By talking to many people you'll get clues as to where it's best to head next, who it might be worth tracking down and so on, which involves long treks through the desert which is populated, as you might imagine, by loads and loads of mutant nasties.



Ah well, if I cock this up there's always *Toobin*.

Dunc: *Bad Blood* is a pure and simple arcade adventure. The arcade comes from the combat scenes (where you can punch or shoot your viewed from above opponents) and the adventure comes from the 'asking loads of different people questions and trying to find your way about in the desert' bits. The gameplay area is extremely large, the task you've been given is a real toughy (with quests and sub-quests) and the graphics are really rather ace (as you can see). What you won't be able to see, however, is that the on-screen action is regularly broken (and we're talking every fifteen seconds or so) for a three second disk accessing pause. You might find yourself in the middle of a fight when suddenly "BZZZZZZZZZZZZ", the game stops and the disk drive goes into action. Or you might be trying to walk from Mardok to Kitrum – quite a time consuming journey at the best of times, but with eighty billion disk accessing waits ahead of you, you may well decide to stay in Mardok, put your feet up and retire. It's a shame really, because apart from this one 'niggle', *Bad Blood* would actually be rather good fun.

HASSLE FACTOR: 8
Play for a few seconds, wait for a few seconds. Play, wait. Play, wait. Play, wait. Ad nauseum.

GRAPHICS 90	ADDICTIVENESS 75	OVERALL 70
SOUND 60	EXECUTION 60	

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Bad Blood
PUBLISHER	Origin Systems
PRICE	ST/Amiga tba PC £34.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	ST/Amiga: tba PC: Out now

STOP

DÉJÀ VU

When you walk into a barn in rural Southern France and are struck by a sudden, spiky feeling that says "I'm sure I've been here before" – that's déjà vu – and you were a peasant called Pierre Cul-De-Chien in your previous life (probably). Similiarly, if you turn to this page and believe you've already seen these games on different formats – that's déjà vu too (coo).

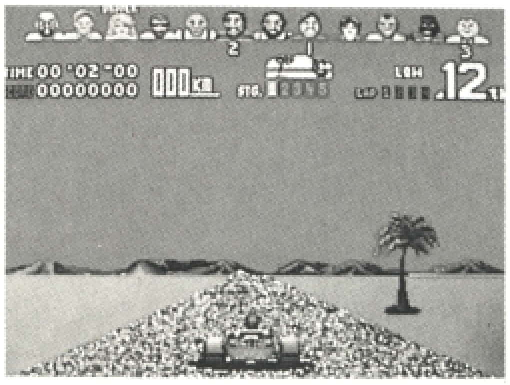
POWERDRIFT

Activision/£24.99/Out now (Amiga version reviewed in ZERO 2)

AMIGA A

Macca: *Powerdrift* certainly raised a bit of a 'storm' when it squealed into the arcades a year or two back. Huge graphics, frantic action, big thrills. However, it raised little more than a 'light breeze' when converted across les formats. In fact, the PC version is probably the best attempt (so go and dump on your neighbour's Amiga).

It's basically a motorcross buggy race 'em up lark, over twenty-five dirt tracks and wooden 'hills'. Track one is dead straight, not a meander in sight. But as you progress, they become progressively trickier, curving and twisting and folding over themselves like the most problematic digestive system. Indeed, the later tracks seemed to be blueprinted from Satan's own infernal alimentary canal, such is their curlyness and general gay abandon. *(Watch it. Ed.)* To further increase the hazard the tyre barriers disappear (woo) and the chicanes tighten (double woo), but your opponents don't get any cleverer. They're not endowed with any strategic cunning and just drive regimentally around the tracks. You can 'burn' them easily.



The graphics are pretty, much prettier in fact than the other 16-bit efforts. However, they all share the same jerky animation and single-figured frame rate, though the PC version seems that much more playable and addictive, albeit at the end of the day a smidge easy.

GRAPHICS 78	ADDICTIVENESS 85	SOUND 67	EXECUTION 75	OVERALL 79

HARDBALL II



Accolade/Out Now/£24.99

AMIGA A

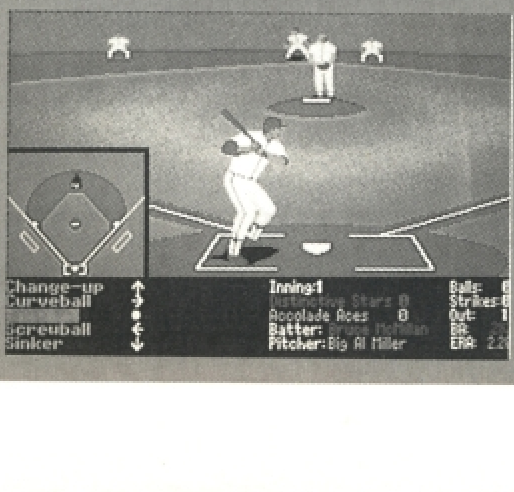
Paul: When the sun finally sets on the last forgotten pavillion, the sound of leather on willow summer will be replaced by the sound of ultra-white teeth on slightly stale popcorn. Ah such is progress, such is baseball.

As a simple knockabout in the park *Hardball II* scores pretty highly. The control system is simple, if a little limited, and it doesn't take long to get the hang of. Unfortunately the graphics, though fairly well animated, have a very PC feel about them. The sound is by no means the greatest thing to happen on the Amiga, (or even the stylophone). Despite this, even a popcorn hater like myself, found the game more than a little addictive.

Once I'd tried to move up a gear into a more tactical game I got a bit bogged down. At this stage it becomes a game for the real baseball enthusiast and stats lover. Anyone who doesn't know the difference between an SLG and a Bunt is likely to flounder like a Frenchman on a cricket pitch.

Accessible to the beginner, yet with enough depth for the enthusiast, *Hardball II* is also the only baseball game to contain a joke about 'Sartre' in the instructions. Spook!

GRAPHICS 75	ADDICTIVENESS 84	SOUND 74	EXECUTION 83	OVERALL 81

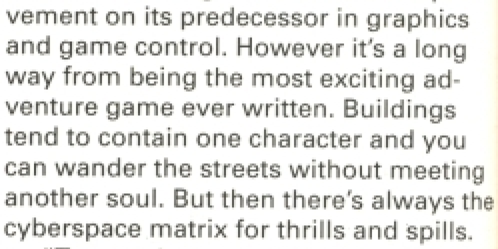


NEUROMANCER

Electronic Arts/£24.99/Out Now

PC

Paul: The Neuromancers, weren't they great? All those flamboyant costumes and catchy hits. *(They were the New Romantics. Ed.)* Ah ... yes, *Neuromancer* was once a book by William Gibson, then it was a PC adventure game. Now it's out on Amiga.



I wasn't too impressed with *Neuromancer* on the PC; graphically dull and not exactly spine-tingling in the event stakes. The Amiga version is an improvement on its predecessor in graphics and game control. However it's a long way from being the most exciting adventure game ever written. Buildings tend to contain one character and you can wander the streets without meeting another soul. But then there's always the cyberspace matrix for thrills and spills.

"To cut a long story short" *Neuromancer* is a bit slow and heavy going. For confirmed cyberpunks only.

STOP

GRAPHICS 79	ADDICTIVENESS 78	SOUND 77	EXECUTION 79	OVERALL 78

CHESS IS A VERY HARD GAME...

Chess. That game played by really odd students with trousers out of *The Avengers* and tatty anoraks. And since *Tim Ponting* has dreadful taste in pants and a sizeable collection of parkas, we volunteered him to review a couple of chess games...



THE LOST PIECES OF CHESS

Chess has been around for so long that people are prone to forget that it has had a long and complicated evolution. Along the way a few rules and pieces have been dropped or changed to accomodate changing fashions.



1 THE COURTIER: Originally placed between the King and the Queen this piece could only move once during the entire game. It was claimed by some strategists that the whole game could be won or lost on the timing of this move. However by the late 15th century most people had realised that this was a pile of crap and the piece was dropped.

2 THE KEEP: An early casualty in Chess development, the Keep could move one square at a time in any direction. However it could only be captured by the opponent's King, Queen, Bishop and two pawns working in unison. This made for some very boring games before the piece was superceded by the castle.

3 THE SWIPE: Not a piece but a rather controversial rule, the swipe was very popular in Northern Europe during the 12th and 13th centuries. In order to speed up slow games a player was entitled to attempt to cleave his opponent's head off (at the neck only) at any time during his opponent's move. Attempts to reintroduce this rule in the mid-1920's received a decidedly cool reception.

CHESS CHAMPION 2175

AMIGA — ZERO HERO

Tim: *Chess Champion 2175.* Hmm, what has the year 2175 got to do with a chess program? Nothing, 'cos 2175 is a score on the international ELO rating system. (See? Not only anoraks and flares but crap Electric Light Orchestra singles too!) This means it's probably better at chess than I am. Ho-hum.

Chess Champion is actually very easy to use. Just about every option you can think of is accessible by means of a pull down menu system. You can choose to view the game from above or in full 3D glory. The opening library is massive, with the option of adding to it in one of two ways: you can either create your own lines or turn on a 'learning' option. In this mode, the computer adds lines it considers to be hot stuff for its own use later. Smug machine.

Hassle Factor: 0
Totally user-friendly unless you're losing.

Other options available include a 'what if?' feature (allowing you to examine the computer's decision-making process in detail) and an ELO rating system. This is a nifty feature that allows the computer to grade you according to the international scale. It'll even give itself a rating!

Chess Champion 2175 is pretty much state of the art stuff for the dedicated connoisseur. But the range of options makes it equally suitable for a beginner. Erm... better find some criticisms, fast. Oh, yes, that's right: I wish it beeped when it made a move. That's all.

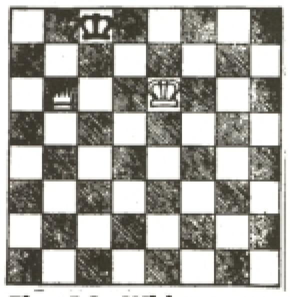


Fig. 10. White to mate in two moves... *(Snip! That's quite enough of that! Ed.)*

GRAPHICS	ADDICTIVENESS	SOUND	EXECUTION	OVERALL
69	85	NA	93	90

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Chess Champion 2175
PUBLISHER	The Software Business
PRICE	£29.95
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	Out now

"*Colossus Chess X*: the ultimate chess program." "*Chess Champion 2175*: the most powerful and versatile chess program yet." Hang on, they both can't be 'the best'. I know, let's feed their moves into each other and see who wins. The contenders: Boris 'Flares' Loptitov (*Colossus Chess X*) and Dr Herbert Snetterswinkle (*Chess Champion 2175*). And may the 'hard man' win!

HEAD TO HEAD



MOVE 1, 2175

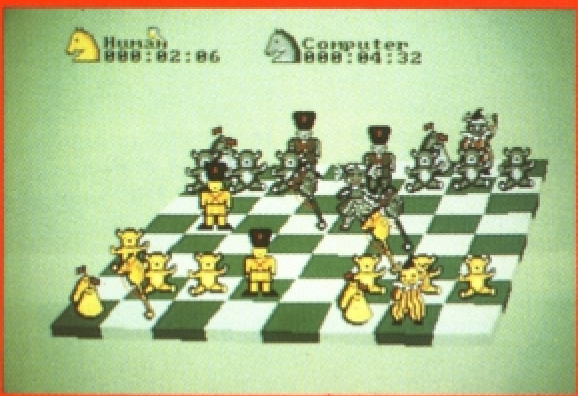
Herbert: I'm rated at 2175 on the ELO international scale, so I'm really rather good at this. Ooh look! Teddy bears and things! And I thought I was going to have to play chess! Oh, I am. Right. I think I'll move one of my little chappies at the front forward two squares – that'll give the opposition a bit of a headache, eh? Now, let's see if this little dolly is anatomically correct, shall we?

MOVE 1, COLOSSUS

Boris: That big idiot from the famous English University thinks he can beat me, The Colossus! He must have the big balls, ya? Right, I will counter with the best line from my chess opening book. Mmm... The Spanish Gambit? No. The Swedish Stratagem? No. Ah, here, ya: 'Now is the winter of our discontent'. What an opener! They will never poke the fun at me in the Cosmonaut's school again!

MOVE 14-ISH, 2175

Herbert: Oh dearie me, this midgame is getting me down. I've already lost two teddies and now he's taken my dolly! Boo-hoo! Still, that's left his horrid cheesy dolly open to attack from my horsie so I think I'll take it. That'll teach you to come disco dancing on my side of the board, matey! Now, what can I do next? I think I'll take my toy soldiers and sandcastles on a frontal assault!





MOVE 18ISH, COLOSSUS

Boris: By the beard of Lenin, he's knocked off my queen! Right, time to, how you say, 'hot up the pace'. You see those photon accelerator things with the rings that look like they've fallen off the back of a pinball lorry? Yes, they're knights! He'll never remember their wiggly move until it's too late! Ha ha ha! These English professors are not clever like Henry Higgins in the supreme motion picture My Fair Comrade!

LAST MOVE, 2175

Herbert: Yawn. Is that really the time? A lot has happened on the board, I can tell you. That Boris chap was fiddling with his particle accelerator things – I knew they were knights in disguise, of course – and blam! Up he went in smoke! Anyway, I decided to play with mys... erm, play all his moves for him. After 67 moves, I still can't beat myself so it's a draw! I'm just too clever by half!



COLOSSUS CHESS X

PC

Tim: *Colossus* is a bit older than *2175* but has recently arrived on PC. It shares most of the same features, most notably the 'learning' option that means the opening book is self-expanding. It runs in CGA and EGA with a range of 3D sets: Standard, Futuristic (very phallic), Medieval and Oriental. They're all awfully pretty and the viewing angle is fully adjustable.

The way in which *Colossus* thinks is fully adjustable, just like sock suspenders from Selfridges. You choose the type of play from a list of six which includes a problem solving option – useful for the newspaper prize jobbies since you can feed in the details and leave it thinking overnight. It's got an 'average time' setting (where you can tell the computer to think about each move for an average of, say, 1 minute) and an 'equal time' mode, where it will try to match your own speed. In addition, you can tell it to predict your next move and think about its reply while you're still scratching your head. In other words, it's 'pretty damn clever'. And very similar to *Chess Champion*.

Hassle Factor: 2
Having a mouse helps considerably.

Anyhow, yes, yes, one good chess game is pretty much like another really, we knew that. But which one is smarter? Well, we had a bit of a problem with the PC, because *Colossus* erm, crashed during the endgame. But it was moving towards a draw anyway – and when *2175* played the last few moves out against itself, it produced the expected draw. So there we are. At the end of the day *Colossus Chess X* and *Chess Champion 2175* 'sort of drew' in the exclusive ZERO sudden death competition.



GRAPHICS	ADDICTIVENESS	SOUND	EXECUTION	OVERALL
81	90	NA	85	87

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Colossus Chess X
PUBLISHER	CDS
PRICE	£24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	Out now

STOP

CRYSTAL TIPS*

*AND ALISTAIR



Just lashed out 30 sponds on a game you can't play because you're a bit of a Sodastream drinker? Then Crystal Tips is here – with alcohol free aid for limp joysticks.



If you're a drinker of watered-down Perrier then you may not have realised that *Flood*, ZERO HERO'd in August issue 10, is crammed full of secret rooms. Yes! Just by jumping, walking or falling into the right part of the screen at certain points of various levels, you get access to several bonus levels.

ZERO has exclusive inside information from the programmers – we know the locations of all of them! Gasp! There are secret rooms hidden on the following levels: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 11, 13, 16, 21, 23, 26, 30, 33 and 35. And here is the definitive guide to finding all of the beggars. The plans are there to give you a rough idea of where to look for the rooms – it's almost impossible to locate them all exactly.

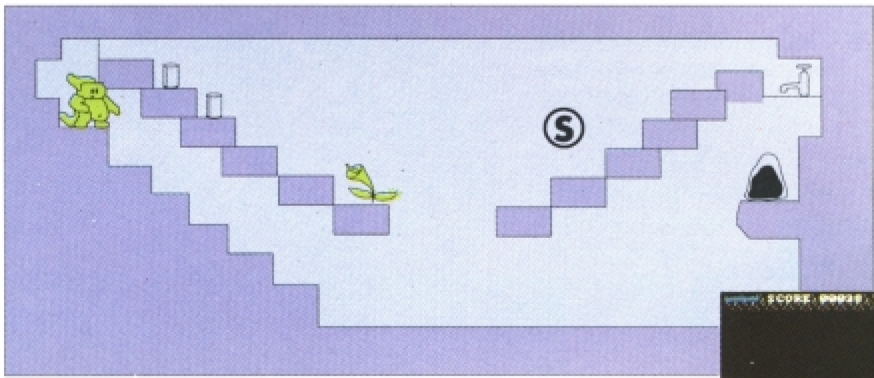
The rooms contain things like extra lives, weapon power-ups and time bonuses which temporarily halt the flow of water in the main game. Make the most of them...

FLOOD

Are you still wet behind the ears? Is *Flood* bringing tears to your eyes? Well, well, well. Bullfrog resist the impulse to make lots of damp references in a comprehensive guide to the secrets of their soggy newie...

SECRET ROOMS – THE SHANDY DRINKER'S GUIDE TO FINDING THEM

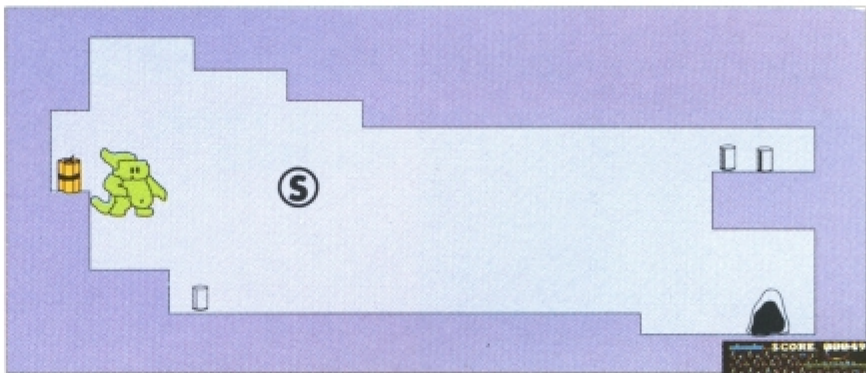
LEVEL 1





Even drinkers of neat lemonade should be able to manage this one. Get onto the third step on the right and jump out to the left.

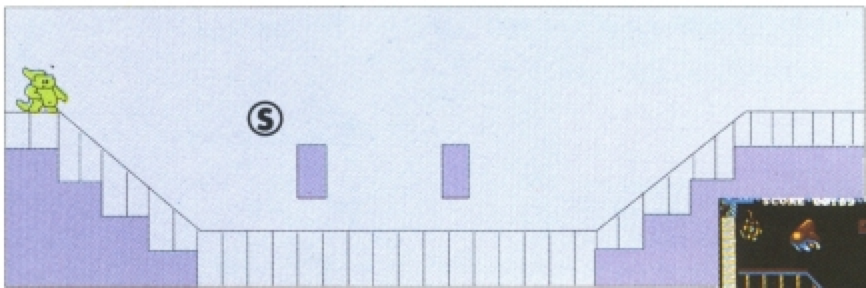
LEVEL 2

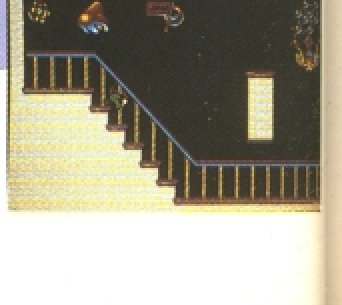




Bit trickier to line this one up. It's actually underneath the second ceiling ledge, midway between the ground and the roof.

LEVEL 3



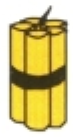


Get onto the platform and jump up and to the left. If you miss you'll get a jolly sore Quiffy.

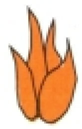
KEY



Quiffy: love him, hate him or just simply stamp on him.



Dynamite: light the blue touch paper and stand well back.



Flame Thrower: to hot up the action a bit.



Psycho Teddy: twice as cute as Quiffy and ten times as deadly.



Flowers: now who said programmers don't have a sensitive side?



Teleport: your doorway to the next level.



Bulbuous Headed Vong: leaves trash, hates Squiffy. Not nice!



Tap: Whether it's on or off, someone's still going to privatise it!

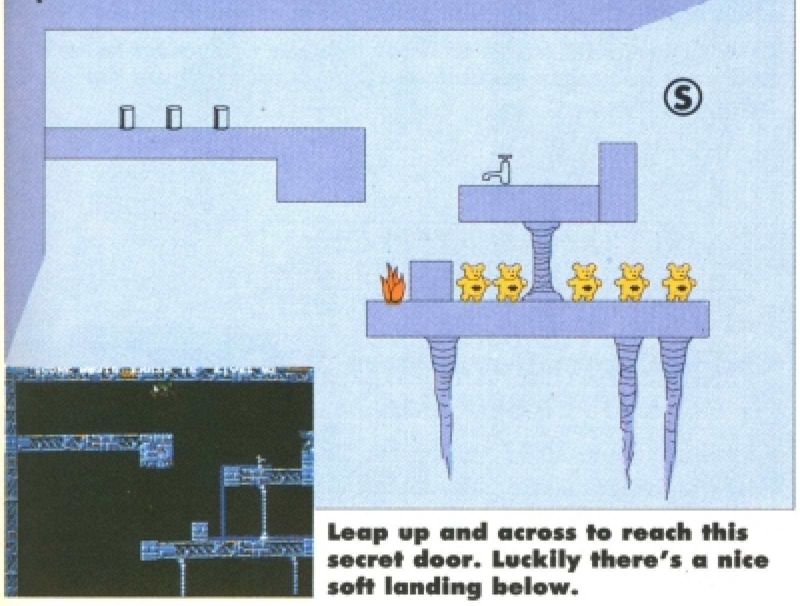


Secret Doorways: behind here lie the secret rooms.



LEVEL 4

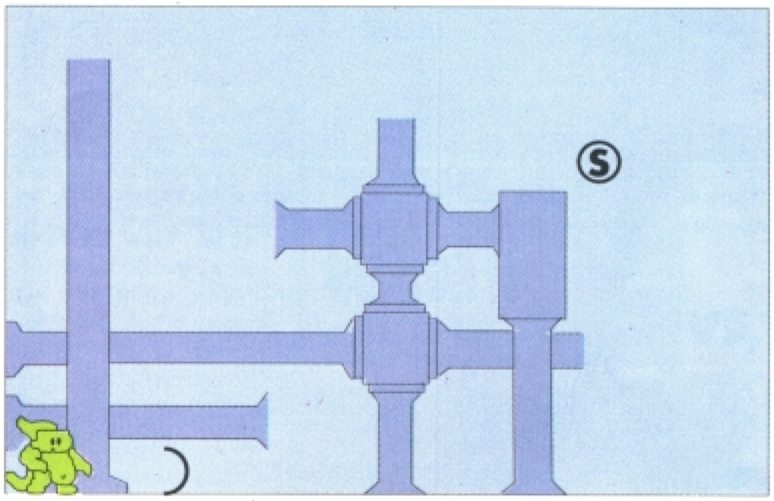
Top Left Hand Corner



Leap up and across to reach this secret door. Luckily there's a nice soft landing below.

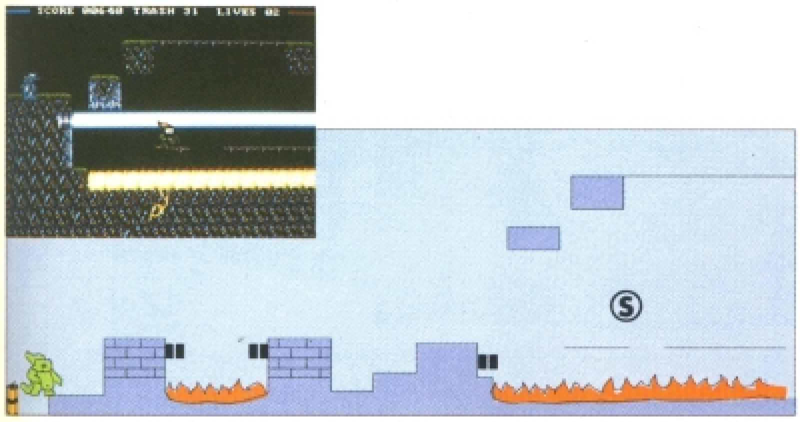
LEVEL 11

Bottom Left Hand Corner



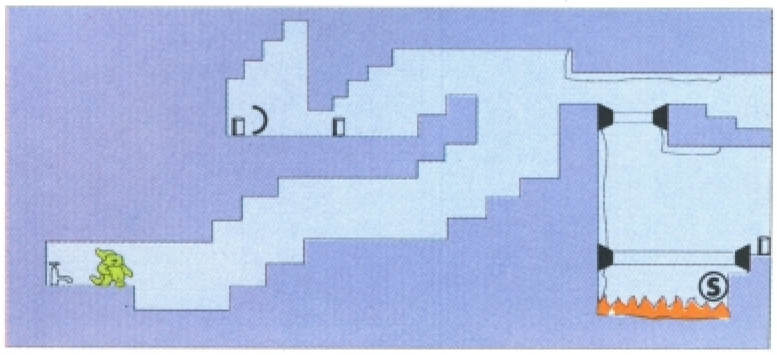
It's rather a good thing that you're not afraid of heights – otherwise you might not fancy this little leap.

LEVEL 6



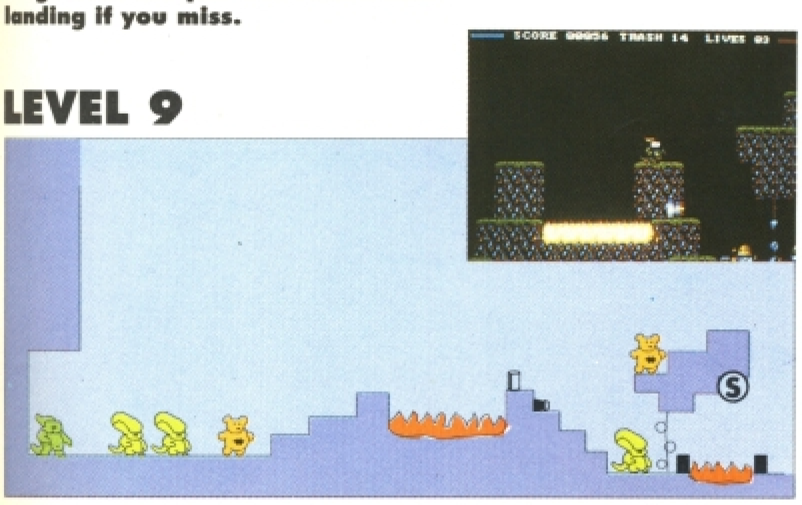
Jump up to the right on the first ledge over the pit. Not such a nice landing if you miss.

LEVEL 13



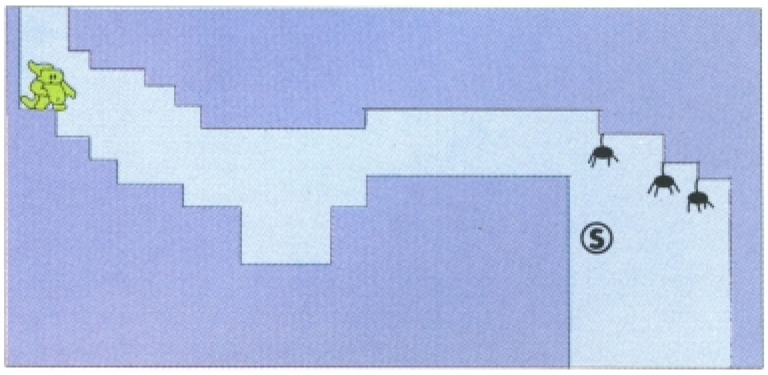
This one's tucked away under the laser bridge. And how are you going to reach it? Ah well, you're going to have to work that out for yourself.

LEVEL 9



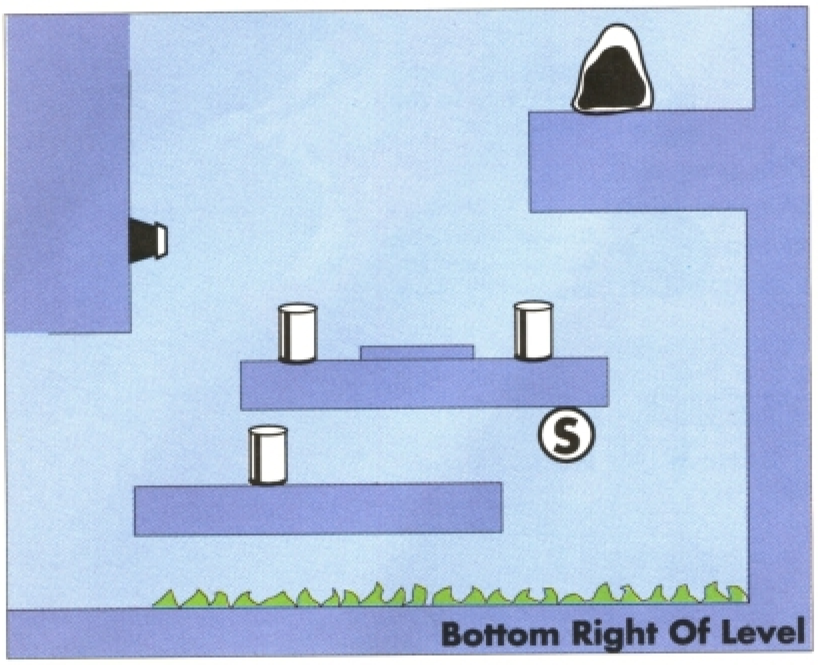
Tucked beneath a ledge over a pit. If you can get to this room you need never drink shandy again.

LEVEL 16



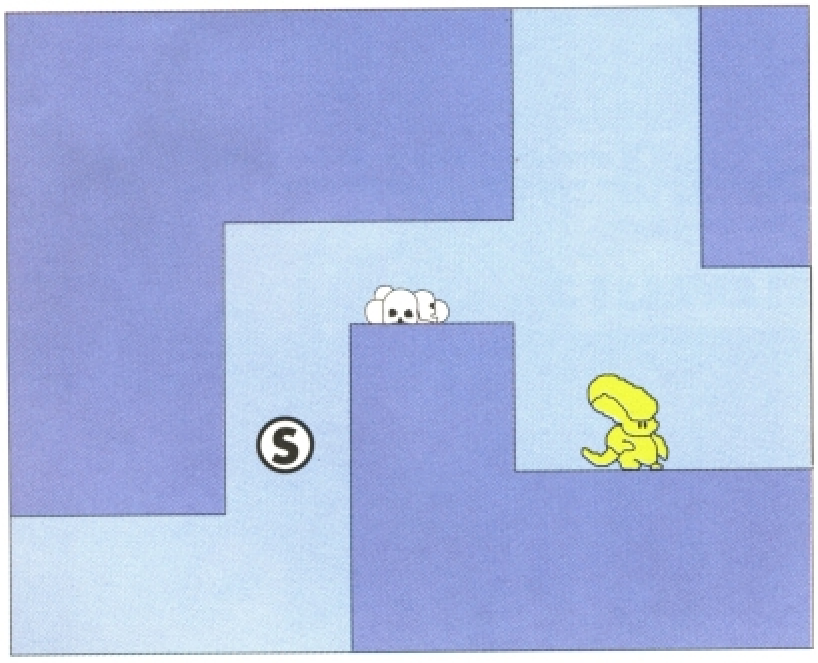
This one's for meths drinkers only. Jump out at the edge of the block and you'll fall into the secret room.

LEVEL 21



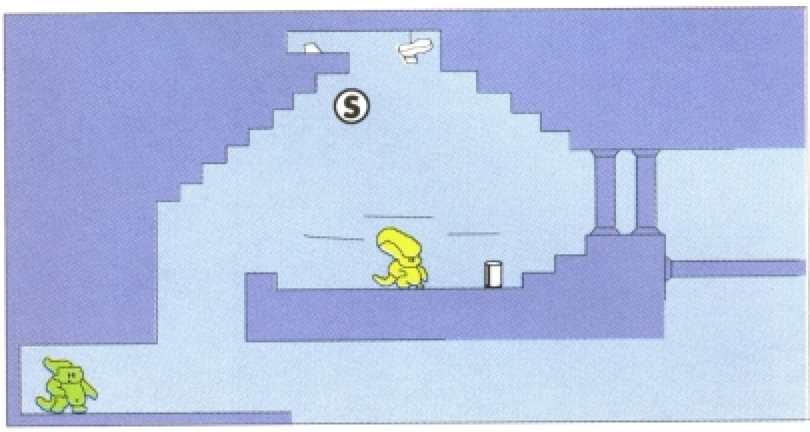
More death defying antics will be needed to reach this teleport situated under the higher of the two platforms.

LEVEL 23



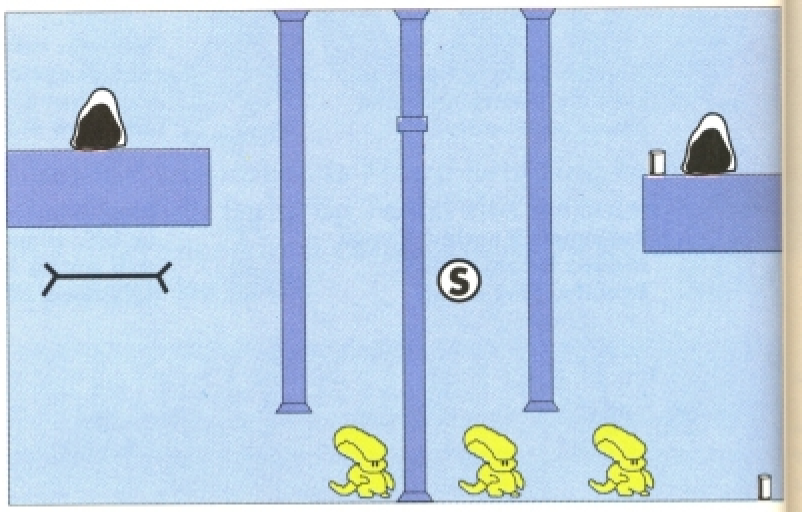
More abseiling to reach this one. It's in the corridors with brick blocks. (After you've activated the switch to go down.) The door is exactly in the middle of the drop.

LEVEL 26

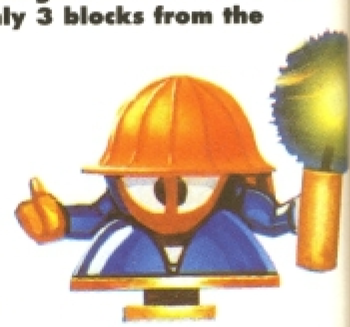


This one's easy peasy japanesey. Clamber up to the top platform, take a deep breath and then step off into space.

LEVEL 30

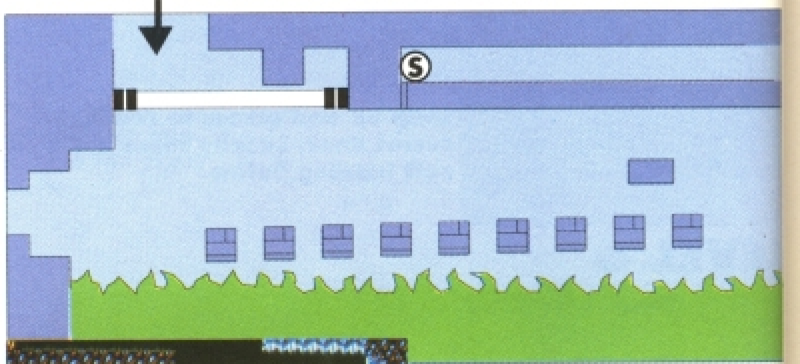


In the room with loads of laser bridges the secret room is half way down the second, roughly 3 blocks from the bridge surface.



LEVEL 33

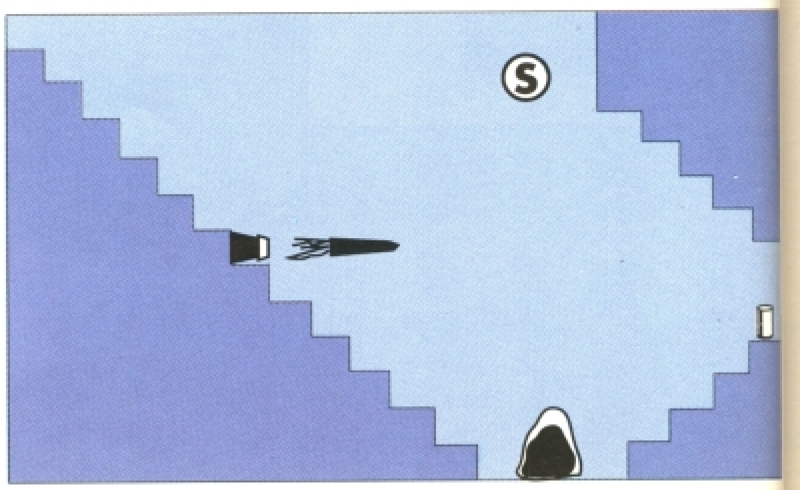
Quiffy Comes Down Here





In the large room with a long larva pit the secret room is lurking atop the second laser bridge. Go there or go square.

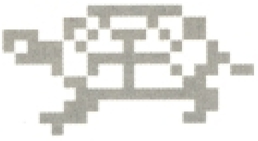
LEVEL 35



A missile launcher, loads of steps and a secret room hanging in mid-air. Let's face it life can be a real bitch at times.



Calls cost 25p (cheap rate) and 38P (at all other times) per minute including VAT.
Voiceline, PO Box 1640, London, NW1 8NG. Please ask your parents permission before you call.

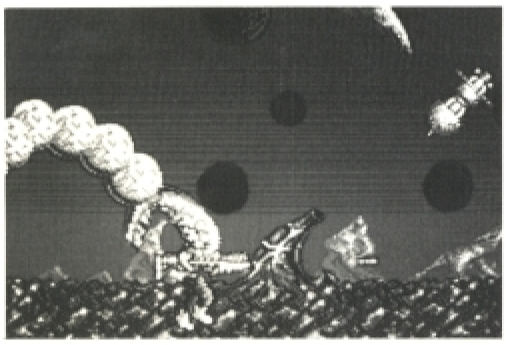


GUTLESS GULLY

"Staying alive! Staying alive!" John Travolta danced to that tune. He had the right idea, so we can forgive him for those trousers. Staying alive is the name of the game and if you're crap – and the kind of person who goes to a toga party wearing underpants underneath – then Gutless 'I'll just slip some lemonade in this' Gully is the place for you.

SLAYER

Rhyse Peile of East Sussex has discovered an ironic little cheat for *Slayer*. Simply attain the end of level one with one life intact and then *slay* the end of level guardian and then crash Jap-like into its dead body. Result: infinite lives. *Slay* the guardian, *Slay*er – oh the irony. *(What a ponce. Ed.)*



AMC

Now, this is more like it. Evidence of skill: reaching later levels and sending in the codes. Nice one, **Peter Rance**. These codes – NOSTROMO, DISCOVERY, ENTERPRISE, DAGOBAH – will allow you to access levels 2,4,6 and 8 respectively.

THE VIKING CHILD

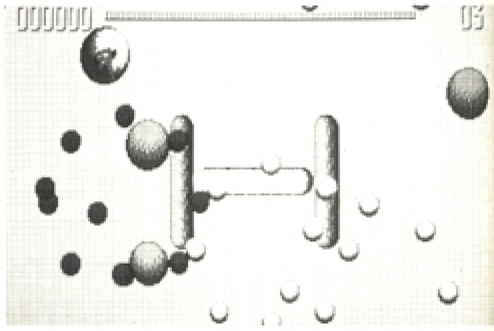
Here's an unusual tip, unusual because it's from an arcade/ adventure player. Eek. As we all know adventurer players aren't breast-fed as children and as a result grow up weaker and less joystick sensitive than us arcaders. They are also usually Geminis and play the lute from time to time. But prejudices aside, **Graham Oliver** and **Ian Trueman** have sent in three passwords for Electronic Zoo's *The Viking Child*. 'DENIS<E>' takes you to the forest, 'SHARKMAN' the labyrinth, and 'NYMHARSW' the desert.

THEXDER

A sweet beautiful little gem of a cheat (I'm in Dan Maskell Adjective mode) for the PC version of *Thexder*. Ensure Caps Lock is on before you load the game as normal. Now, during the game, if your energy becomes threateningly low, pause with ESC, press Y, then ESC to unpause, for maximum energy. Thanks to **Graham Oliver** for that tip.

SUPER-HANG ON

Apparently (and this is a dubious tone) according to **David Winstanley**, you can get machine guns on your bike in this game. Hum... sounds a bit iffy but we'll give it a try. Beat the top score on the high score table (simple-pimple), then enter your name as '75OJ' (that could be 'o' or nought). Then simultaneously press and hold down Z and T while the screen changes from the credits to the options screen. The cheat mode screen will appear and when you start the game the Amiga key activates the gun. You can now vapourise scenery and other bikers (ho-hum).



E-MOTION

On the title screen, type 'MOONUNIT' then F1 will advance you one level, F2 ten levels, F3 back one level, F4 back ten levels. **Alan Ginger Beer Jarvis** busy sipping his Liebfraumilch again.

DYNASTY WARS

A quickie here from **Alan Jarvis** of Brum who's found that pressing F2 on the title screen will allow you to skip a level.

GHOSTS AND GOBLINS

Oh, dear, oh dear. **Alan Jarvis** obviously sips wine from a glass. All us arcade stalwarts, if we're forced to drink wine, have it in pint glasses and down it in one and then, belch incredibly loudly. So while we're all baring our bottoms to women in the pub, Alan's at home discovering that typing 'DELBOY' on the credits screen makes you immortal.

HOW TO DO IT!

Stuck in a game? Just drop a line to the ZERO How To Do It column. This month (since we've just started) we've got a made up letter from Basingstoke.

Dear How To Do It,

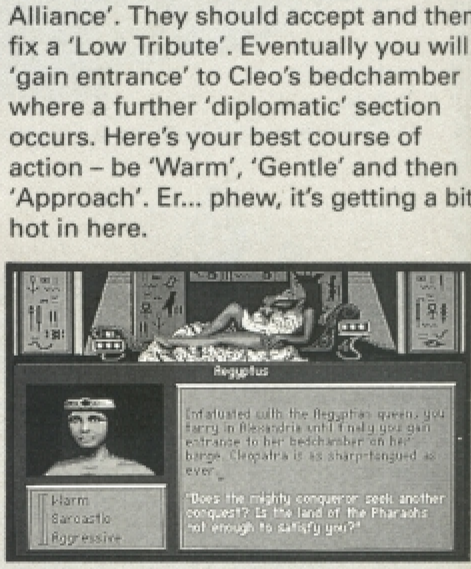
I recently bought *Centurion* by Electronic Arts, and have successfully managed to conquer the Ancient World. However the box promised me that I could seduce Cleopatra. Everytime I invade Aegyptus instead of going to bed, we always go to war. Please can you tell me "How To Do It'

Yours 'having failed to score with Cleo',

Jeff from Basingstoke.

Erm, excuse me a moment while I slip into something more comfortable.. Right, here's the definitive ZERO guide to erm, 'copping off' with Cleo:

Only enter Aegyptus when you have attained the rank of Consul or Pro-Consul with a Consular Army at full or near full strength. In the diplomatic section choose to be 'Friendly', 'Friendly', then 'Offer Alliance'. They should accept and then fix a 'Low Tribute'. Eventually you will 'gain entrance' to Cleo's bedchamber where a further 'diplomatic' section occurs. Here's your best course of action – be 'Warm', 'Gentle' and then 'Approach'. Er... phew, it's getting a bit hot in here.

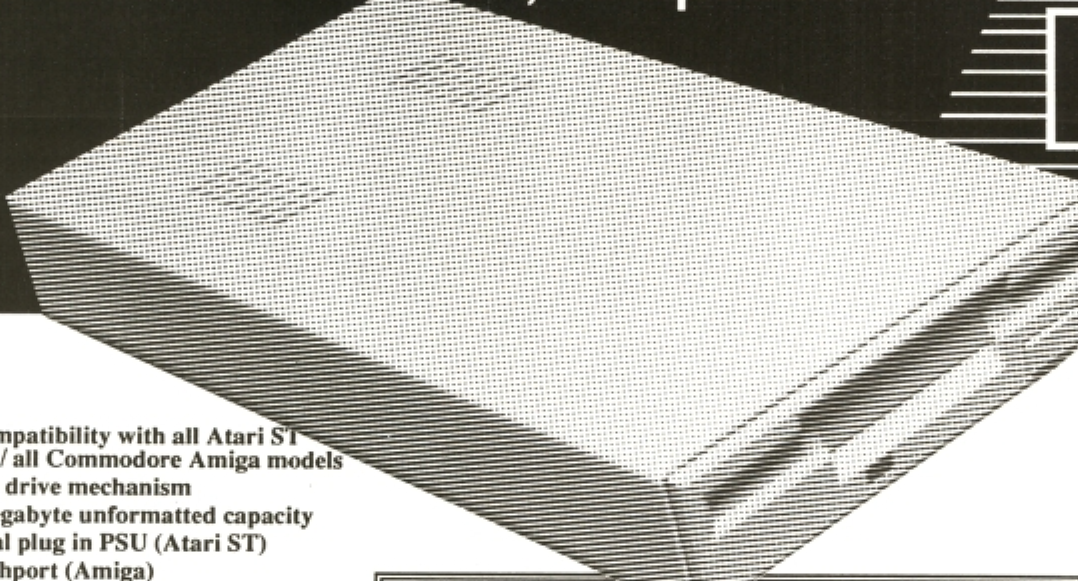


Cleo! Conquer me! Conquer me!

Is anyone else out there having problems downing their wingman in *Finest Hour*, or getting off with the Governer's daughter in *Pirates*? Drop us a line at **How To Do It, ZERO, 14 Rathbone Place, London, W1P 1DE.**

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Mega ST2 with mono monitor	£849.00
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SM124 high resolution monochrome monitor	£99.00
SC1224 colour monitor	£269.00
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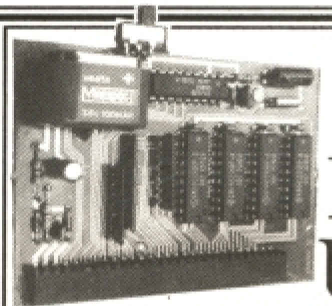
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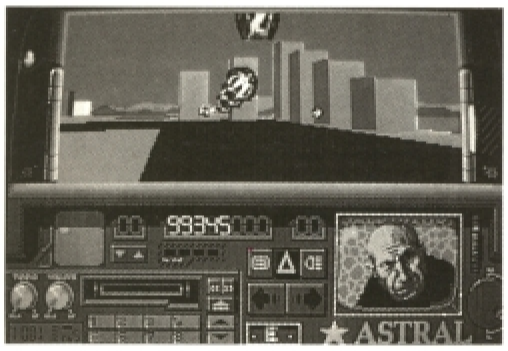
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IMPROVE YOUR HEX LIFE!

***Jon North's* been up to his usual tricks poking his way into everyone's Hex Life. Has he nothing better to do?**

People have been writing in saying that hacking a game spoils it and that POKEs shouldn't be used. In that case, why are you reading the column? I don't know, but I do know that Pqzrkxs is back (readers of issue 8 IYHL will recognise the name) and this time he/she/it has hacked another Amiga game. Which one? Read the column!



RESOLUTION 101 (AMIGA)

This is my only hack this month, seeing as I've been dominating it somewhat over the last few issues. This thing will give you infy shields, although your skimmer can still get waterlogged.

```
10 REM Resolution 101 by Jon North
20 T=0:DIM CHEAT%(1024)
40 FOR X=0 TO 137
50 READ B$:B=VAL("&H"+B$):
CHEAT%(X)=B:T=T+B
60 NEXT X
70 IF T<>1560308& THEN PRINT
"ERROR":STOP
80 C=VARPTR(CHEAT%(0)):CALL C
90 DATA 4CFA,00C3,0010,2C78,0004,
4EAE,FF3A,2840
100 DATA 6612,4E75,0000,0600,0001,
0002,0000,0030
110 DATA 0000,0400,70FF,4EAE,FEB6,
4BEC,0048,3AC7
120 DATA 429D,3AC0,5280,67DA,93C9,
4EAE,FEDA,2AC0
130 DATA 2A8D,2B4D,0008,589D,4295,
4BEC,0008,7A05
140 DATA 1A85,41ED,0038,5C8D,2AC8,
3A86,41FA,0050
150 DATA 9080,9281,224C,4EAE,FE44,
4A80,66A4,224C
160 DATA D8FC,0100,337C,0002,001C,
41E9,0024,9BCD
170 DATA 48D0,3080,3346,0012,4EAE,
FE38,41FA,0032
180 DATA 3218,3018,EAB8,D040,3998,
0000,0480,07FF
190 DATA FFFE,64F4,5341,64EA,4EAC,
000C,4ED0,7472
200 DATA 6163,6B64,6973,6B2E,6465,
7669,6365,0000
210 DATA 0001,0568,41FA,0010,43EB,
008C,701D,32D8
220 DATA 51C8,FFFC,4ED3,069F,7600,
43F9,0007,2000
230 DATA 41F8,2FE4,612E,4A40,66E4,
4FF8,0800,41F8
240 DATA 2FE4,4EBA,082A,41F8,3000,
317C,4A79,4804
250 DATA 317C,4A79,63B4,4268,51A8,
4268,56D8,4268
260 DATA 56E0,4ED0
```

AMC (AMIGA)

As I promised, Mr. No-vowels himself (assuming he's a he), **Pqzrkxs**, is back (back back), with a hack for infy lives for this Dinamic game. Incidentally, don't use it unless you've got a 1-meg machine, or it will crash in an array of lovely colours.

```
10 REM AMC by Pqzrkxs
20 T=0:DIM CHEAT%(1024)
40 FOR X=0 TO 103
50 READ B$:B=VAL("&H"+B$):
CHEAT%(X)=B:T=T+B
60 NEXT X
70 IF T<>1024846& THEN PRINT
"ERROR":STOP
80 C=VARPTR(CHEAT%(0)):CALL C
90 DATA 4CFA,00C3,0010,2C78,0004,
4EAE,FF3A,2840
100 DATA 6612,4E75,0000,0600,0001,
0002,0000,0030
110 DATA 0000,0400,70FF,4EAE,FEB6,
4BEC,0048,3AC7
120 DATA 429D,3AC0,5280,67DA,93C9,
4EAE,FEDA,2AC0
130 DATA 2A8D,2B4D,0008,589D,4295,
4BEC,0008,7A05
140 DATA 1A85,41ED,0038,5C8D,2AC8,
3A86,41FA,0050
150 DATA 9080,9281,224C,4EAE,FE44,
4A80,66A4,224C
160 DATA D8FC,0100,337C,0002,001C,
41E9,0024,9BCD
170 DATA 48D0,3080,3346,0012,4EAE,
FE38,41FA,0032
180 DATA 3218,3018,EAB8,D040,3998,
0000,0480,07FF
190 DATA FFFE,64F4,5341,64EA,4EAC,
000C,4ED0,7472
200 DATA 6163,6B64,6973,6B2E,6465,
7669,6365,0000
210 DATA 0001,0760,6004,07C3,377C,
4A79,146A,4ED0
```

SCRAMBLE SPIRITS (ST)

Well would you believe it, we even have an ST poke this month! Makes a change, doesn't it? (hint). This was in fact supposed to be in issue 9, but somehow ended up on the cutting room floor. As written by a couple of mates of mine from Carshalton College, **Tracey Carter** and **Nikki (whose surname escapes me)**, here's infinite lives.

```
10 REM Scramble Spirits by Tracey and
Nikki
20 T=0:OPTION BASE 1:DIM
A%(1024):CHEAT=VARPTR(A%(1))
30 DEF SEG=0:REM REMOVE THIS LINE
IF USING NEW BASIC
40 READ B$:B=VAL("&H"+B$)
50 WHILE B<&H10000
60 POKE CHEAT+X,B:T=T+B:X=
X+2:READ B$:B=VAL("&H"+B$)
70 WEND
80 IF T<>B THEN PRINT "DATA
ERROR":STOP
90 CALL CHEAT
100 DATA 42A7,3F3C,0020,4E41,2878,
04C6,3EBC,0001
110 DATA 2F0C,2F3C,0004,0002,4E4D,
4FF9,0008,0000
120 DATA 41FA,001E,3418,3018,721F,
C240,EA48,D040
130 DATA 43F4,0000,32D8,51C9,FFFC,
51CA,FFEA,4ED4
140 DATA 0001,03E0,6070,0B18,41F9,
0007,EE02,43FA
150 DATA 001A,700A,30D9,51C8,FFFC,
23FC,6000,FF6A
160 DATA 0007,EE96,4EF9,0007,EE00,
31FC,4A69,7C36
170 DATA 31FC,4A69,7DB6,4EF8,
0404,0000,0000,001301FE
```

STOP

IDIOT'S GUIDE

This is the brain-taxing bit. With no parental help you have to TYPE IN the listing exactly as shown into the Basic on your machine, SAVE it if you want, PUT THE GAME DISK in the machine, CANCEL and IGNORE any requesters, RUN the program, IGNORE any weird screen effects (good, aren't they?) and then PLAY the game. Actually, you can have parental help if you want, but I imagine you'd be a bit embarra-ssed to ask for it.

As the bottom of the page becomes ever closer, I have just enough time to say that if you've hacked any games lately and fancy a bit of an ego-boost (not to mention a T-shirt or a game or something nice), send the results to me, Jon North, at IYHL, ZERO, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE. Be seeing ya!

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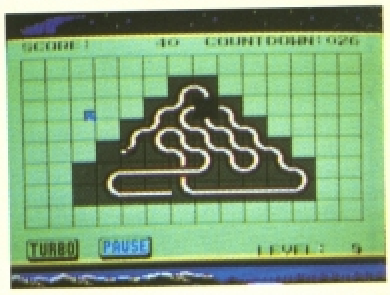
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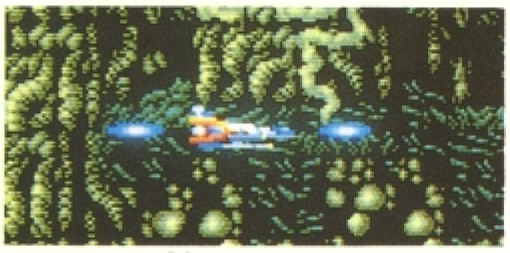
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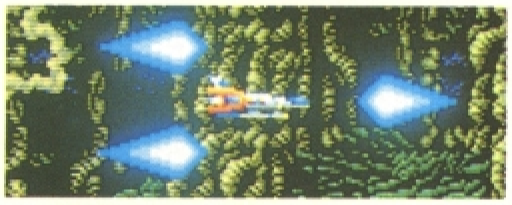
Well here you have it – *Thunderforce III*. The follow up to that well known game *Thunderforce II* which, for all you Trivia fans, was the follow up to *Thunderforce*. Reaching the grand old age of 3 (revision number, that is) is a monumental event for any game, but can Tecno deliver the goods once again? After all, you could argue that Tecno are milking the genre a tad.

Just like its predecessors, *Thunderforce III* is a shooty-shooty bang-bang type of game. Yes, it's time to disengage the brain, insert the adrenalin drip and prepare for some good, clean fun. Yes, there's nothing like sinking your red hot laser into some unsuspecting alien filth.

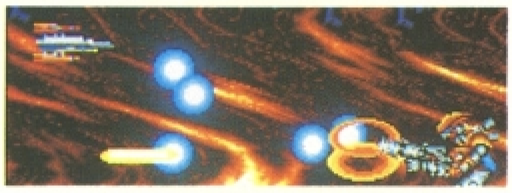
You know, computers are starting to get too damned smart for their own good. After many centuries of running BASIC programs that print 'HELLO MUM' on the screen a thousand times, computers within the land of *Thunderforce III* have decided that man is no longer needed – to be more precise, his very existence is a pain in the processor. So it's computer against human in a war that will decide the very fate of mankind.



BACK FIRE: This one is installed on your ship at all times. Select it and bolts of cannon fire shoot out from both directions.



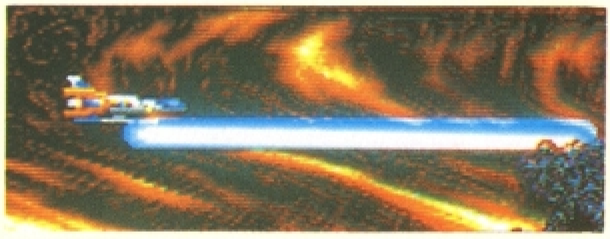
LANCER: Three bloomin' great blobs of blue light flash before your eyes (what have I been drinking?). They may look pretty to you, but to aliens – they mean only one thing... death.



HUNTER: Snow ball-shaped laser death. Just push the fire button and these babies find their targets automatically – don't bother aiming.



TWIN SHOT: Your basic firepower. Persevere and it'll take most aliens out.



SEVER: Streams of white death leap from your ship, taking most aliens to their doom. A couple of well placed blasts send most aliens on their way.

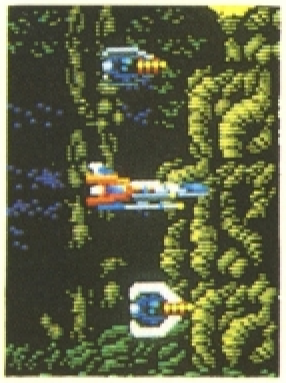
It's time to strap yourself into your starfighter and go kick some silicon ass. We humans don't take no nonsense from computers – if they wanna start this war, they better be prepared to taste proton particles, 'cos I've got a big gun and I'm not afraid to use it. (*Get on with it. Ed.*) No matter how much your big gun may impress, it ain't gonna be enough to fight your way through the baddies you'll encounter.

But help is at hand with the much sought after and very collectable ACME power-up thingies that seem to be standard fittings for every battleground. In true *R-Type* style, shoot the carrier then collect his load to bestow a tasty bit of hardware on your fighting machine.

Each level takes place on a different planet. There are five in total; all of which must be brought to heel before you can go after the big mutha computer that's causing all the bother. But this is no mean feat, as all the levels contain totally different nasties that are agreed on one thing – they want to pull the plug on your operation. Each alien has its own way of dishing out death: some sweep in from behind while others prefer to dive in head first. Once you've put an end to their dastardly plans, each level culminates in very vicious end-of-level guardian that must be disposed of before you can proceed further. On the easier levels, your flight computer will tell you how to destroy this baddie, but as you near your final goal, such information suddenly stops. It's then up to you to find the guardian's soft spot (trying to tempt him with a box of chocolates definitely won't work).

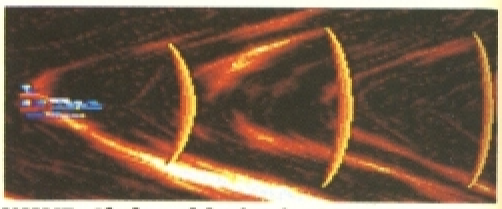


SHIELD: Protect your own posterior from unfriendly fire with this deluxe fully sounding shield system. It can be yours for just 50 pee and 20 tokens from the back of special packs!

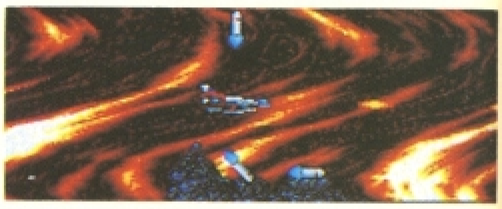


CLAW: Two drones encircle your ship, dishing out extra fire every time you push your fire button. Within an instant, your firepower is tripled. Ha ha ha! Die suckers!

To be honest, *Thunderforce III* bears more than a striking resemblance to IREM's arcade classic (*R-Type*, that is). Many of the aliens that hurtle towards you both look and move as if they're moonlighting for Tecno. If you've ever played *R-Type*, then you'll have no problems at all getting into *Thunderforce III*. One particular level that is blatantly *R-Type* features an extremely large multi-screen starship that is destroyed by knocking out the weaponry that juts out from its superstructure.



WAVE: If the old aim isn't up to scratch, then this is the weapon for you. Streams of bent banana-shaped laser fire take out any aliens.



FIRE: It may not look like much, but those missile thingies can sure kick ass. In true sidewinder style, these missiles skim along the surface.

Tecno really do know their Mega Drive hardware from their elbows. Huge chunks of graphic are thrown about the screen at break-neck speeds, closely followed by even larger chunks of graphic that travel around the screen at equally impressive speeds. Even then, the game manages to keep nine levels of parallax (multi-plane) scrolling running smoothly in the background. If you ever need to know why you chose a Mega Drive over all the other available consoles, then *Thunderforce III* is the answer. It's simply a stunning shoot 'em up sensation.

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QUICKIES

Atari boss Sam Tramiel has recently revealed plans for a new generation of consoles. These so-called 32-bit consoles will not be based on the much-rumoured ST consoles. In fact, Tramiel was very evasive about what they would actually be based on.

Console Quest have extended their game exchange facility to include the Mega Drive. Send in any old Mega Drive game plus an appropriate amount of cash and Console Quest will supply you with a new game of your choice. Details on (0903) 63786.

No doubt about it, Amstrad are to launch a console sometime during September. However, due to non-disclosure agreements being signed, exact details about the machine can't be revealed until later in the year.

There's no end to console launches. Commodore, it seems, are close to unveiling their cartridge-based C64 console. The machine, dubbed the C64GS, should sell at under £100. Cartridges will be compatible with the existing C64's slot. Two 4Mbyte cartridge games are already in the pipeline: *Fiendish Freddy* and *Flimbo's Quest*. Watch out as the sparks fly this Christmas as Amstrad and Commodore try to out-do each other on the console front.

HEY, GOOD LOOKING

Sega have decided to boost their ageing Master System console by giving it a face-lift, price cut and new name. The Master System II is simply a sleeker version of the old system.

The new shell is half the size of the existing Master System and about the same size as the Nintendo Entertainment System. While the machine has been halved, the price has also taken a battering. Machines can be picked up in the States for under $60 (£35).

Sadly this new machine won't arrive in the UK before Autumn 1991. Even then, it's unlikely to cost as little as £35.



FINGER PAINTING

NEC's palm-top PC Engine mentioned last month has finally been launched in the States. Called the TurboExpress, the hand-held machines measures a mere 4.3 by 7.3 by 1.8 inches and weighs less than 1.5lbs.

The TurboExpress, previewed at the recent Chicago CES, is able to display 256 colours on its back-lit, high-resolution LCD screen. The Express runs existing PC Engine software on credit card-size cartridges. Even more exciting is the fact that it is also compatible with the Turbo Graphx (the so-called 16-bit PC Engine) and all its software.

An optional TV tuner is available for the Express costing $79.

Sadly there are no plans by NEC to sell the $249 machine in Britain. However, you can bet grey importers will have a ball.

HOME BOY

Cybertech are offering two arcade-like cabinets, the BudgetBoy and ProBoy, for use in the home. In addition, a video panel – the Universal Energizer reviewed last issue – and an arcade-quality monitor are in the offing.

The idea is that you build up a system equivalent to a coin-op for a fraction of the cost. Actual arcade PCBs can then be bought and used with the system.

Firm pricing hasn't been decided on, but you can expect to pay around £130 for the BudgetBoy, £200 for ProBoy, £200 for the monitor, and £150 for the video panel. Blimey. And on top of this you must add the cost of an arcade board – these start at around £30 for old games.

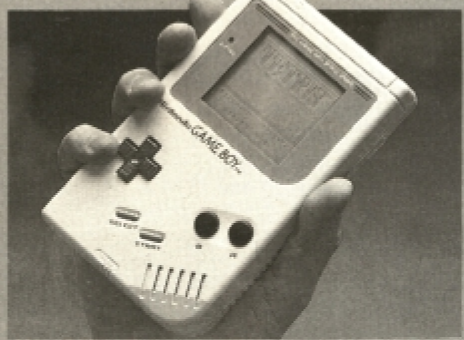


Interested? You'll find Cybertech on (0453) 544582.

NINTENDO GET POKED

A sensational device called Game Genie has been launched by Galoob Toys in the States which enables Nintendo games to be poked. Like the Multiface, Action Replay and Nordic Power available for various home computers over here, the Game Genie enables games players to cheat while playing any Nintendo game.

Game Genie sits between the cartridge and the console and can be put into action at any time by the player. So you could have infinite lives in *Mario Brothers* or invincibility in *Salamander*. Naturally the Game Genie has caused a rumpus in the States where Nintendo are suing Galoob for copyright infringement.



Interestingly, the Game Genie was developed by UK budget kings, Code Masters and then licensed to Galoob. The device is aimed at the US market, but it's expected Code Masters will unleash their wares over here soon.

DEVIL'S DELIGHT

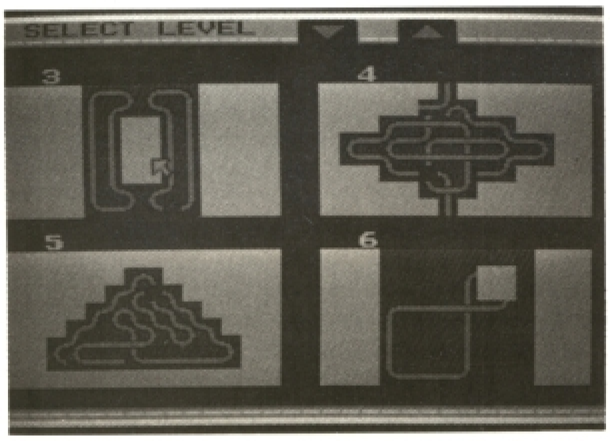
Just out for the Game Boy is *Red Alimer* in which you play the Devil, Beelzebub, Satan, Lucifer, Thatcher – call it what you like – and must travel round the World doing dastardly deeds. Unfortunately that's about all that can be gleaned from the game as it's in Japanese.

Red Alimer is an arcade action adventure. The arcade sections are easy to handle, but the adventure side of things can prove tricky as the menu options are all in Japanese.

If you just can't wait for the US version, you can contact Console Quest on (0903) 63786 for details.

BLODIA

Hudson Soft/£29.99/PC Engine



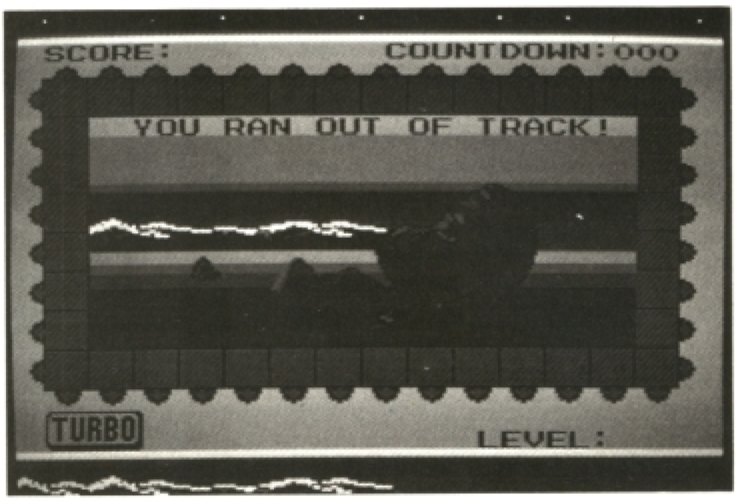
Choose your screen and you're away. If you click on one of the two arrows at the top of the screen, you can scroll through the entire list of available screens.

My what an exciting game. It looks tedious, it sounds tedious and you could draw parallels with the United States squad's football playing ability. But hang on a mo – didn't someone once say that simple games are often the best? After all, take *Tetris* for example – visually it's about as stunning and attention grabbing as... er, something that's not very stunning and attention grabbing at all. If all games were judged on first appearances, then *Tetris* would definitely have been filed under 'Don't Touch With A Bargepole' long ago.

Blodia is like a cross between that classic Amiga game, *Diablo* and the ol' sliding tile games you used to play when you were a kid. (*Actually I still play them. Ed.*) The aim of the game is simple. Each screen consists of a track that has been split up to resemble something like her majesty's highways. To complete a screen successfully, you must arrange the pieces of track in such an order so that a ball can be rolled from start to finish without interruption. If you fail to keep the ball rolling along solid track, it drops off the screen and cracks into thousands of little pieces.

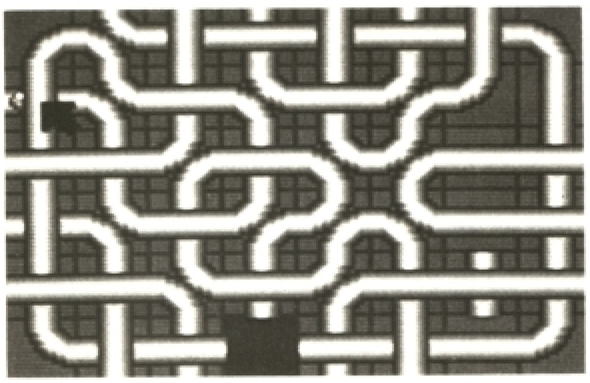
As soon as you start a particular screen, that little ball starts rolling, so time is against you. It's up to your quick thinking and dexterity with the old tiles to finish each screen. The game comes complete with twelve preset screens, but you can create your own with the built-in screen designer. Yes folks, you too can build your own screens of exciting *Blodia* action. Hurrah!

Blodia is definitely a thinking man's PC Engine game. If your idea of fun involves anything even remotely arcade-ish, then *Blodia* is not for you. For most PC Engine owners, playing *Blodia* will appear to be about as much fun as watching paint dry on Bernard Manning. And you could also find yourself wandering back to blasting aliens in *Gunhead* or saving Kiwis in *New Zealand Story*. Strategy fans will just love it; the game starts off very simple but soon gets frustratingly complex. Long live logic.



How's it feel to be a failure? (*I don't know. You tell me. Ed.*) Your ball bites the dust and cracks up.

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With all those lengths of track to arrange, you'll need to be a pretty flippin' brainy swot to work this one out.



And... erm, here's one I prepared earlier. It's the cool, trendy, thinking man's track. *(You crawler. Ed.)*

CHEAT!

Crikes! Look at all these cheats and tactics for the latest console games. Our tips will help you reach those levels you never thought possible.

SUPER HANG-ON

Mega Drive
Select the password option and enter GFF3F546F35564. This will knock up your credits to $9,999,999,900 which is more than enough to deck your bike out with some serious extras.

KID ICARUS

Nintendo
When you visit a trader, pressing both A and B buttons on the controller plugged into the second port will slash his prices instantly.

GHOST HOUSE

Sega
Jump on about 15 arrows to gain extra points. Everything will turn yellow enabling you to walk through everything.

SON SON II

PC Engine
Hold down Up, button 1 and SELECT. Press RUN and you will receive a magic lamp at the beginning of the game. This will allow you to continue the game once all your lives are lost.

TWIN HELI

PC Engine
Fancy three extra lives at the start of a game? Fly to the bottom left hand corner of the screen and drop a bomb and you'll receive them.

GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS

Nintendo
When the title screen appears, hold down the RIGHT button and press button B three times. Next, press and release UP and press button B three times. Repeat this procedure with the DOWN and UP buttons. Start the game and you can use the A and B buttons to select the level you wish to start on.

CAPTAIN SILVER

Sega
To activate the continue option, push up and both buttons at the same time. This works on all but the first level.

COP A CARTRIDGE

Show us how devious you can be by sending in your console cheats and we'll reward you handsomely if you get your name in print. The prize? How does a brand, spanking new cartridge for your console sound? Tempted? Go on, you *know* it makes sense! Write to **Console Action, ZERO, 14 Rathbone Place, London, W1P 1DE.**



BATMAN

Sunsoft/£26/Game Boy

Law enforcement just isn't what it used to be. Back in the good old days, the word of peace, justice and the American way was maintained by your local police department. These days however, they entrust this task to a geezer in a rubber suit and calf-length boots. Makes you wonder what Cynthia Payne would make of it all!

Stop it now! How dare I cast doubt on everyone's favourite hero, that saviour of the weak, that hero of the just, that symbol of everything that is good, Batman. He may have just about finished doing the rounds on the home computers, but Game Boy owners can finally join in the fun with this latest cartridge.

Most of the game consists of classic platform gameplay. Batman can run, jump and duck his way around the screen – just like a real hero ought to. Pedigree Chum enhances Batman's high jumping abilities... err, actually depressing the jump button for longer periods gives him that extra bit of bounce and vitality that is required.

There are four stages for Batman to fight through. You start your quest in Gotham City, with goons attacking you from all directions. But Batman, being the well-hard mega hero he is, doesn't stand around and take any jip from a bunch of social dropouts. No sir-ee, with weapon in hand, a quick tap of the fire button sends most baddies off to the big rehabilitation centre in the sky. As you progress, you'll find bonus blocks scattered around the various levels. Once collected, these give Batman a whole array of new weaponry to help him enforce the law.

Next is the Axis chemicals plant to hunt down that arch villain, Jack Napier. Fight your way through more goons until your reach your goal – Jack himself. He is going to need some subtle persuasion to give up his life of crime, so be prepared to fight to the bitter end.

Stage two sees you dodging and ducking the debris. Sounds easy? Don't bet on it; you've also got to jump over holes that someone has left lying around.



Missiles primed and at the ready, it's time to jump into the Batwing and take a bit of a spin around the skies of Gotham city in section three. This isn't a pleasure trip though, as there is some serious business to be done. It's hell up there, but a Bat's gotta do what a Bat's gotta do. One mistimed manoeuvre and you could well end up as bat soup all over the streets of Gotham. Holy crispy croutons!

Popcorn primed and at the ready (*What? Ed.*), the adventures of Batman are reaching their final, climatic conclusion. High in the dark and misty heights of the Gotham cathedral, Batman must fight his way through a seemingly endless army of hoodlums to reach the Joker at the very top of the cathedral. Get to him quick or he'll show his chopper to your girlie, Vicky Vale – and you know what happens then.

To say that *Batman* is big would be an understatement – this game is huge. Just like the Ocean home computer version, *Batman* on the Game Boy will take the charts by storm. If you only intend buying one cartridge for your Game Boy, then this is the one to choose. Addictive gameplay, great graphics and a sonically superb sound track makes it a classic.

HOLY BAT WEAPONS!

GUNS

Your gun's firing rate can be speeded up by collecting this bonus. But watch out for the inversed gun icons – they'll have the opposite effect.

WAVE

Who's ever heard of a side-winding bullet? Batman has!

TRANQUILIZER

Flies right across the screen, taking any baddies in its path with it.

POWER

On later levels, some baddies need more than one shot to kill them outright. With this little baby, enforcing the law suddenly becomes that bit easier.

SMOKE

If things start to get tight, then this smart bomb-like weapon will put you back in control.

SHOT

Modifies your bat gun to spit death at a high rate. Get the Bat-Kalashnikov, Robin!

BATWING

Add up to four drones to Batman's weaponry. They encircle batman, shielding him from contact with goons.

BATARANG

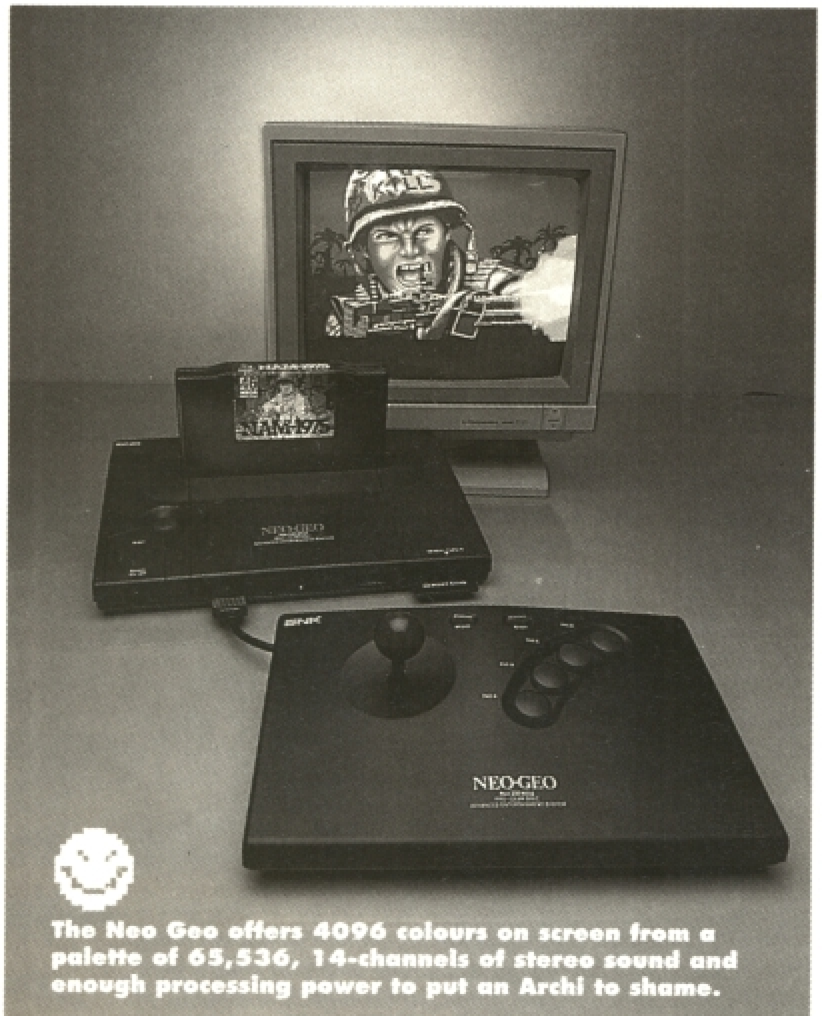
If a baddie gets too close for comfort, then the Batarang automatically gives them a hint they'll never forget.

THE VERDICT/89

Many thanks to the chaps at Console Quest (on 0903 63786) for supplying us with the review copy of *Batman*.

BRAVE NEW WORLD

There's a new machine in town that looks set to blow everything else out of the water. Console Action wonders whether it'll sink or swim.



The Neo Geo offers 4096 colours on screen from a palette of 65,536, 14-channels of stereo sound and enough processing power to put an Archi to shame.

For the ultimate in gameplaying escapism there's nothing to beat the thrill of an arcade crammed with the latest coin-ops.

The concept of playing coin-ops at home using something a lot less bulky than an arcade cabinet has been floated for some time. SNK, long-time producers of arcade games, have come up with the first workable solution.

Unlike other systems that claim to let you play arcade games at home – the Universal Energizer, Access-Twin, Kic Control Box and Shin Video Game for instance – Neo Geo offers easy-to-slot-in software. With other systems it's necessary to hunt out old arcade boards and find an appropriate power supply. You end up with a spaghetti junction of cables and silicon on the floor. The Neo Geo, on the other hand, comes with cased plug-in cartridges.

The Neo Geo comes in two separate parts: the console which offers a cartridge slot and the control pad boasting a massive arcade-quality joystick and fire buttons. There's not a whole heap of silicon in the machine; the majority is kept in the cartridges. The heart of the Neo Geo though, is a 16-bit 12MHz-rated Motorola 68000 processor. Both the ST and Amiga contain slower variants of this chip. In addition, there's a 4MHz Z80A processor which looks after sound handling.

You'll also find 64K of main RAM, 68K of screen RAM, 64K of ROM and custom graphics and sound hardware. It's the custom silicon that's most interesting. Up to 4096 colours from a palette of 65,536 can be displayed on screen simultaneously. Screen resolution is programmable; the trade-off being colours. The graphics chips also offer the programmer 380 sprites, hardware zoom and hardware scroll.

Sound isn't skimped on either. A three-voice programmable sound generator, four-voice FM (frequency modulated) synthesiser and seven-channel PCM (pulse-code modulated) generator combine to provide stunning music and sound effects. In short, you can have sampled speech, a thunderous backing track and sound effects simultaneously. To top it all there's a stereo jack through which you can output sound.

So much for the impressive hardware. Wait until you get a glimpse of the software. Games come on huge 19cm by 12cm by 3cm cartridges. The reason the cartridges are so big and heavy is because an enormous amount of graphic and audio data needs to be stored on ROM. Around 50Mbytes of information is typical. 50Mbytes is roughly equivalent to 64 ST or Amiga disks full of information.

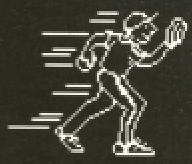
Sadly this incredible gaming system is too expensive to become a mass market product. Numerous grey importers are offering the console for around £400-plus and games at £200-plus. The good news is that DG Marketing are set to officially distribute the system in this country. While no firm price has been set by DG, it is rumoured that prices will be well below those quoted by grey importers.

At around £200 for a game it's unlikely you'll have much of a software collection. For this reason DG Marketing are setting up a rental system whereby you hire the games, and even the machine, for short periods.

HOT SLOTS

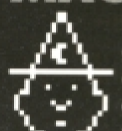
Five titles – including *Baseball Pro, Nam 1975 and Magician Lord* – are already available for the Neo Geo; many more are expected. All games released for the Neo Geo will be identical to SNK's coin-ops in the arcades. (Except that you don't have to pay 20p a go!)

BASEBALL PRO: BASEBALL STARS



Sports sims, particularly baseball sims, can be dodgy. Not so *Baseball Pro*. The colourful cartoon-like characters are superbly animated and the non-stop patter of the American commentator is hilarious and crystal clear. *Baseball Pro* comes as a shock if you're used to traditional console and computer baseball sims.

MAGICIAN LORD



Beautifuliy detailed graphics teamed with a devastating sound track and gameplay. Huge multi-coloured monsters attack in this multi-level platform fantasy hunt and shoot game. If you think the ordinary monsters are tough, wait until you get to grips with the end-of-level guardians. They're absolutely gigantic and throw so much death-dealing rubbish your way that the screen turns into a veritable fireworks display.

NAM 1975



A shoot 'em up extravaganza for fans of pulsating, gun-toting action. The game is a cross between *Cabal, Operation Wolf* and *Operation Thunderbolt*. The colour, detail and action are phenomenal. Playing *Nam* is like being permanently hooked up to an adrenalin drip, with blood and bullets galore. One or two-player simultaneous action is possible.

STOP

Thanks go to Cybertech (0953) 544582 for supplying the Neo Geo system.

ICE 'N' A SLICE

Who's afraid of the big bad Coldcut? *Steve 'Jace' Phillips* leaves his Kylie Minogue T-shirt at home and goes for a dip in an acid graphics bath with the DJ producers so cool they leave fridge open...





Jonathan and Matt of Coldcut cutting something, or... cold.

QUESTION: what have Lisa Stansfield's *People Hold On*, Yazz and the Plastic Population's *The Only Way Is Up*, Coldcut and Junior Reid's *Stop This Crazy Thing* got in common with BBC2's Reportage theme? **ANSWER:** all the music was produced by Coldcut.

Coldcut is actually two London DJs – Jonathan More and Matt Black – who, after serving an 'apprenticeship' in various London nightclubs discovered each other and the key to chart success at the same time. Coincidence or what!

In order to find out what their secret is, I dropped in on them while they were busy working with Youssou N'dour (one of Peter Gabriel's partners in ethnic music) and Daniel Lanois (U2's producer) at Virgin's Townhouse mega studio complex. Here I learned that behind the dance beats that sell thousands of records are an Atari 1040ST computer (running C-Lab's popular *Creator* sequencer), a sampler and a ridiculously large number of records...

MY, WHAT A BIG COLLECTION

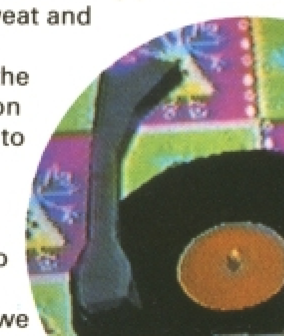
"It must be more than 10,000 records now," says Matt.

The records span everything from classical music to punk, Pink Floyd to acid house and back again. But it's from here that Jon and Matt steal odd bits of music, feed them into their sampler and put them back together as chart-topping singles – with a few ideas of their own, of course. I mean I've got a sampler, a 1040ST and a large record collection but I haven't had a number one for, ooh, um, absolutely ages. Maybe ideas do help after all.

"Every song has been lovingly crafted with blood, sweat and tears," protests Matt.

"It's a triumph of the distiller's art," adds Jon stealing a beer advert to replace his own conversation.

"We feel that all music is there for us to party with," explains Matt, "I don't know if we can make each party a national hit, but as long as we're having a good time we'll carry on. There are still plenty of new pastures for us to explore – at the moment, for example, we're moving into reggae."

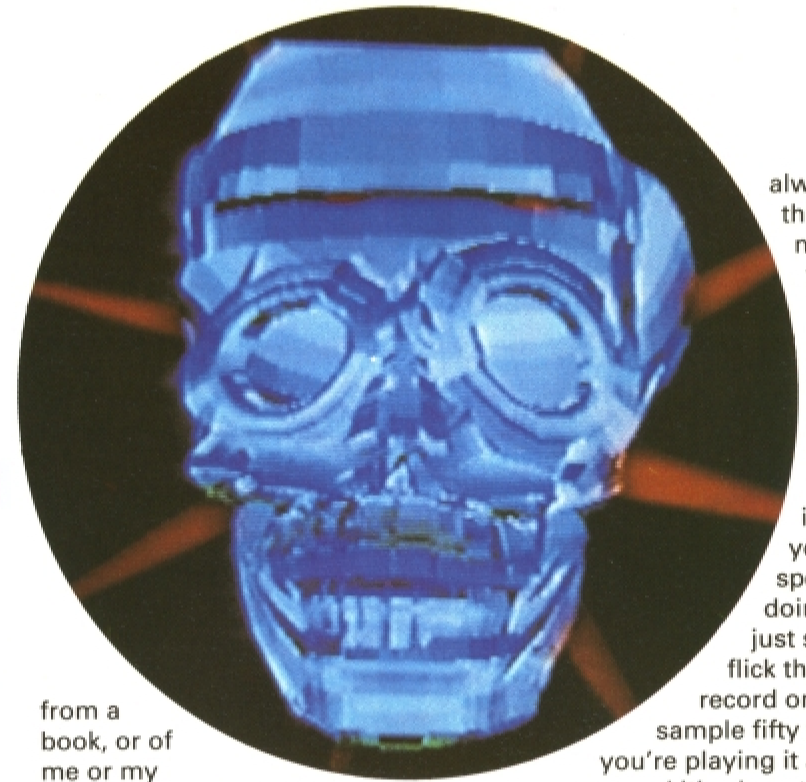


MY, WHAT A BIG MEMORY

When they first broke into the pop charts they were using a Casio FZ1 sampler but when they hit the big time – and the big bucks – they decided to splash out on an Akai S1000 and a hard disk drive.

"It's great," says Matt, "because all that memory means you can go through a stack of records and sample everything you like."

But how do you decide what to use when



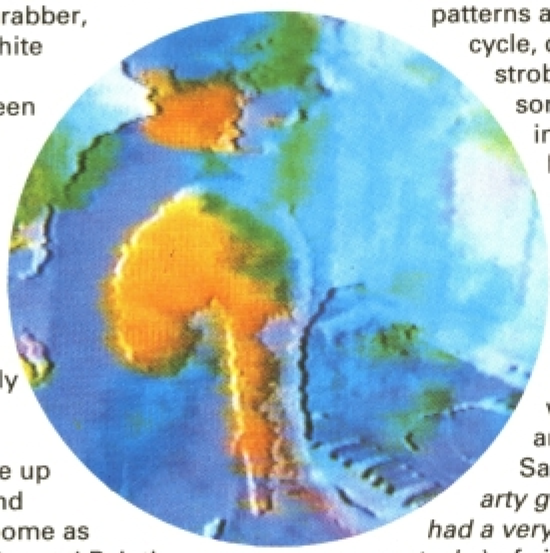
you've got 10,000 records?

"It's actually very difficult when there's such a range of stuff to go through," Jon agrees. "What you're looking for might be on some sixties trash LP or a Led Zeppelin album. And let's face it, ploughing through heavy metal records isn't the most pleasurable experience, is it?"

MY, WHAT A BIG GRAPHICS SET-UP

I don't think I'd argue with that. While Jonathan slips back into Studio 1, Matt tells me about their latest passion: computer graphics. Last Christmas, Coldcut released a single called *Coldcut's Christmas Break* which was accompanied by a pretty racy video. But it wasn't the expensive production job that most bands simply have to have before they can hold their heads up in the local wine bar; instead, it was put together on an Amiga and a Macintosh by Coldcut and a video team called Hardwire.

"I've got an Amiga 2000 and quite a few toys for it," says Matt reaching a new level of excitement. "I got that rather than a Mac so that my four grand budget would stretch to quite a lot of software and a frame grabber, *Genlock*, a black and white camera and so on."



"The guys we've been working with use Mac and Archimedes and each of the computers has its strengths. It's interesting – there's no clear leader like there is in music. But I see what's happening with graphics as being totally analogous to what's happened with music. You're as likely to come up with something wild and imaginative sitting at home as someone sitting on a Quantel Paintbox at 16 quid an hour."

"I've been waiting 15 years – literally - for computer graphics to get down to this kind of level so that I can afford to get in there. I've got a bit more money than I had a few years ago, so I've leapt in there and got going. I know not many kids are going to have 4000 pounds, but another reason I got the Amiga is because it's the one a lot of kids have got. A lot of kids have got Amiga 500s with memory expansions and a lot of those kids spend all their time doing demos and computer graphics. It's an underground culture – I don't think many people realise how big computers are with kids."

You can grab a Picasso head in, draw over it and you've made it yours!

"I see the whole computer graphics thing as being analogous to the dance revolution – which is where a lot of the effort in sampling and a lot of the technology has gone. I'm now sampling pictures off video or using the camera, from a book, or of me or my girlfriend or whatever. I'm grabbing those things in and mashing them together. I can take them into Deluxe Paintbox and mess about with them – change the colours, erase the original drawing and just leave an out-line... That analogous to sampling and scratching. Then there's an 'acid' thing where you can just draw abstract patterns and let them cycle, colour cycle, strobe... When this sort of tech gets into the hands of kids, they're going to start doing some pretty weird stuff."

It's all very well surrounding yourself with computers and becoming the Salvador Dali (*an arty geezer who had a very silly moustache*) of video graphics, but what are you going to do with the stuff once you've made it?"

"Obviously there's TV and video," says Matt looking up from his crystal ball. "We're going to release our next album on CDV (Compact Disc Video). I don't know if that's the medium of the future, but it stands as good a chance as any of them at the moment."

"Aesthetically I think audio and video go together anyway, so it must work. I don't see why people in a couple of years, instead of putting out house records on their own dodgy white labels, shouldn't be putting out a video of half-hour mad, chaotic cut-up images and some beats that they've done as well. And they can be doing it on an Amiga or on a Mac. They're doing the music, they're going to be doing the visuals."

"Maybe I'm just a freak, but I've always been into both things. There are so many analogies between the way the two areas are developing and the way you can get in there and hack and the way that you can sample. You can grab a Picasso head in, draw over it and you've made it yours! I spend whole evenings doing this sort of thing. I just sit in front of the TV, flick through the channels, record onto videotape and sample fifty frames off it. Once you're playing it at seven frames per second it's almost subliminal. There's no way you can say 'that's from'. Or maybe you will. The legal aspect is pretty serious. I'm sure it's going to cause problems, but it's going to be the old argument. Theft is nothing new. Also it's much more easy to hide your sources in graphics that it is with samples. If I flip a picture from side-to-side it's just as effective. If I take a picture I've sampled in, draw over it in loving detail and erase the original, what are you saying now?

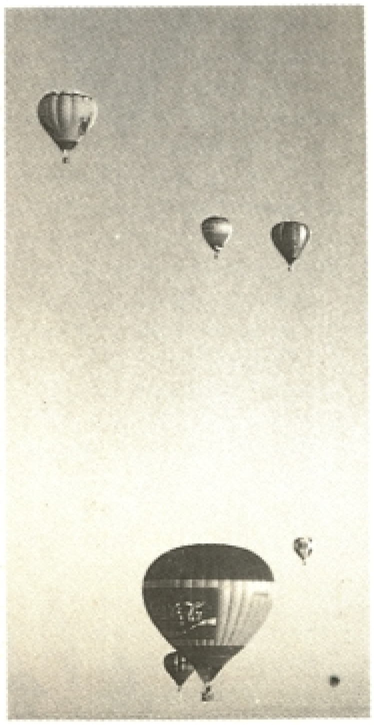
You're as likely to come up with something wild sitting at home as someone sitting on a Quantel Paintbox at 16 quid an hour.

"The graphics thing isn't quite there yet; it's going to need another year or two years to really, really get going, but in the next year it'll start really moving. And we're going to see more people getting involved in it."



But before we see if Matt's predictions come true, Coldcut's third LP, *Some Like It Cold*, will be out. If you want to know what you can do with a computer and a sampler, check it out. It may be the blueprint for what you'll be doing with your computer and a video camera next year...

IT'S ALL A LOAD OF HOT AIR



WIN WIN WIN

A TRIP FOR TWO IN A HOT AIR BALLOON 10 COPIES OF *ST DRAGON*



The Sales Curve are reaching for the skies to celebrate the launch of the exciting shoot 'em up *St Dragon* on their brand new Storm label. The winner of this rather fabbo competition will get a voucher entitling him/her/it and a friend/enemy/relation to a free flight in a balloon. The 10 runners-up will have to keep their feet on the ground but only just – 'cos they'll win a copy of *St Dragon* for their fave computer.

UP UP AND AWAY

As everyone knows the ZERO crew are always looking for a new stunt to test their nerves of steel (hem). The latest idea was to fly a formation of hot air balloons into the heart of *St Dragon*. Pretty daft you might think and you'd be right. It wasn't long before the squadron was in complete confusion. To bring order to the chaos we need some numbers. All you have to do is count the number of balloons in the picture.

THEN WOT?

Ah, now comes something a leedle bit different. Instead of writing to the normal address you've got to use the telephone. Simply ring (0898) 335 513 and state the number of balloons in the screen shot, your address and the format of your computer. (It's probably better if you wait until the phone is answered before doing all this.) Your call will only cost 20p. (You'll be cut off after you've clocked up that much money.) So it's the same price as a stamp and you don't even need to walk to the post box. Easy or what?

0898 335 513



NB

1. Make sure you've got the permission of the bill payer to use their phone.
2. Make sure you dial the right number – unless you want to end up speaking to Leather Linda or Rubbery Roberta.
3. Make even surer that you've given the answer and your name and address.

RULES

- Any employees of Dennis Publishing or The Sales Curve caught entering will be permanently disconnected.
- Entries received after 30th Sept. 1990 will be cut off.
- The Ed's decision is final, no crossed lines.

STOP

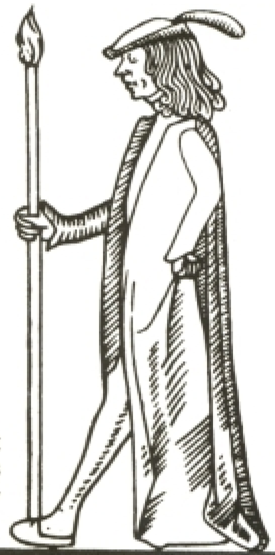


SNIPPETY-POO!





Midnight: a small hedgehog is on a tour of the gardens of Huntingdon in search of saucers of milk. You'd never notice if *Mike Gerrard's* chin wasn't attached to it. Some people will do anything for a bit of adventure...



These cyberpunk adventures really do my head in...

I've so much to tell you, cherubs and cherubesses, about the wonderful world of adventure, that I've had to snip this month's column into little snippets. These separate globules of information will help you digest it all much more easily.

DICK AWARD WINNER

The latest creation from the *Bard's Tale* team is a sci-fi RPG based on William Gibson's cyberpunk novel, *Neuromancer*, winner of Hugo, Nebula and Philip K. Dick Science Fiction awards. Published by Electronic Arts, it's out on Amiga even as you read this and you can read the déjà vu review in its full glory on page 58.

Neuromancer is set in Japan in the 21st century, where the entire world is connected up to one vast computer system, you play the part of a futuristic hacker. Your task is to hack into government and other computer systems – but before you can do that you have to figure out ways of getting better information and equipment on the streets of Japan. Well, not actually on the streets, but you know what I mean.

Sounds like a 'cracking' game to me (geddit?). And it'll cost you £24.99, if you've a yen to buy it.



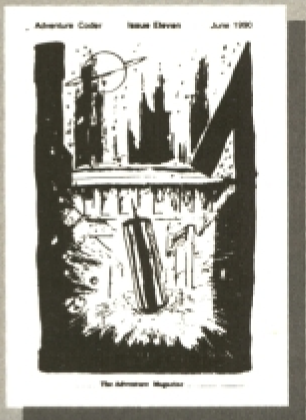
SEE BARNSLEY AND DIE

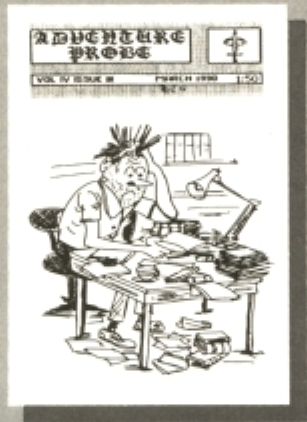
Or rather, see Barnsley and don't die, at least not in *The Bard's Tale*. I refer not to the Barnsley made famous by that professional cloth-cap, Michael Parkinson, but to adventurer **John R Barnsley**, who abides at **32 Merrivale Road, Rising Brook, Stafford, Staffs ST17 9EB.** If any of you think his address sounds rather like something out of *Lord Of The Rings*, then that may well be true as Tolkien is believed to have taken some of his Middle Earth names from that region in Staffordshire where John lives.

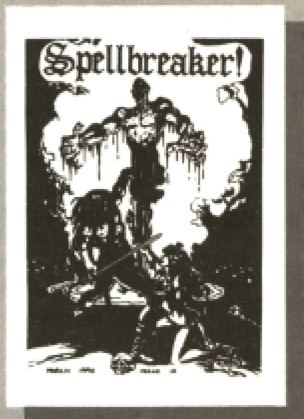
Be that as it may, John has just sent me a disk he's produced for ST owners: *The Bard's Tale Help Disk*. This contains a solution to the game plus a list of Magical Items and another list of Monsters. What's most useful, though, is that the disk also contains full maps of the game. These can be viewed on-screen using the familiar public domain SLIDE.PRG, but also can be printed so

ADULTERY CAN BE FUN!

Just occasionally we allow you to be unfaithful and read another mag, provided it's not some rubbishy attempt at a ZERO clone. Fortunately there are several magazines dedicated to our fave type of game. Although home-grown, they're far from amateur and show what you can do with a good DTP program: produce a specialist mag and make it pay on a small number of subscribers. So what's what?







GET A CODE CURE

Adventure Coder **covers all machines and all aspects of writing and selling your own adventures; from doing all the programming yourself to using the various utilities. And Editor Chris Hester has also been writing a series called "Learn Machine Code the Easy Way".**

Although the mag's put together on an 8-bit machine, it has started to cover the 16-bit market. There's a regular column on using STAC, compos, news and reviews in its 40+ pages. If you're into adventure writing, Adventure Coder is a must-buy. It costs £1 in Britain, £1.50 in Europe and £2 elsewhere.Send your sterling to C. Hester, 3 West Lane, Baildon, Nr Shipley, West Yorkshire BD17 5HD.

FANCY A PROBE?

Adventure Probe **is the granddaddy of adventure mags. Or 'grandmammy', as it's always been edited by women in its four-year history. Founded by Sandra Sharkey (STAC playtester and author of** ***Shymer*****), it's now edited and published by Mandy Rodrigues, who uses an ST to produce the huge 43 page** ***Probe*****.**

Covering all aspects of adventure games, Probe's a good place to track down older adventures, buy and sell second-hand games or find telephone helplines.

Probe **costs £1.50 UK, £2 in Europe or surface mail outside Europe, and £3 airmail outside Europe. Flash the cash to** ***Adventure Probe*****, 67 Lloyd Street, Llandudno, Gwynedd, Wales LL30 2YP.**

SPELLING TEST

Spellbreaker **concentrates on how to solve adventures. It weighs in at about 40 A5 pages every month with solutions, maps and tips. There's also a solutions service and lists of telephone helplines.**

Although it's produced partly on an ST, it concentrates mainly on the 8-bit market. But then editor, Mike Brailsford, can only publish the contributions he receives, so all you16-bitters out there send Mike your tips today!

Spellbreaker **costs £1.50 in the UK, £2 in Europe or for surface mail to the rest of the world and £3 for outside Europe airmail. Make the pennies payable to** ***Spellbreaker*****, 19 Napier Place, South Parks, Glenrothes, Fife, Scotland KY6 1DX.**

that you've got hard copy.

John's also just published the fifth in his series of adventure solutions disks, this one with 24 solutions on it, from *Blackscar Mountain* to *Ultima V*. Although it's an Atari ST disk, some of the solutions are to games only out on the PC and not yet on the ST, so it would be useful to PC owners too. Maybe if you PC owners ask nicely, John will produce a batch of disks with ASCII files on PC format 3 1/2" disks which the ST can read from and write to. And ST owners needn't ask nicely, they just have to send him £2.50 per disk – which includes post and packing – or even packing and posting.

'ERE, WANT SOME SWEDISH DISKS, NARMEAN?

Sandra Sharkey's a busy little bee. Not content with running the STOS Public Domain library, she's also going to be doing the same for the newly released AMOS, the Amiga version of the famed, fast programming language from Mandarin Software. The STOS library includes five Swedish disks, which sounded interesting to a grubby-minded pervert like me but turned out to contain the winning entries in a Swedish STOS games-writing contest. Anyone interested in using STOS to write adventures should get a list of disks from Sandra, as they include several useful add-ons, plus a complete adventure called *Daze Aster*, showing how you can incorporate digitised piccies and sampled sounds in your game.The AMOS library is sure to build up in the same way, so be sure to contact Sandra at **78 Merton Road, Highfield, Wigan WN3 6AT.**

INFOCOM, INFOGO

Infocom may no longer be the company we used to know and love but it's still around as an Activision label on which they can bring out adventure-ish games. The latest is *Circuit's Edge*, just out throughout Europe on the PC, with other versions to follow. *Circuit's Edge* is "a journey into a decadent world of futuristic vice and corruption". Wha-hay, sounds like my kind of game. It's based on two sci-fi novels, *When Gravity Falls* and *A Fire In The Sun* by George Alec Effinger and I wonder what he says when he's asked "Are you Effinger?".



It's a Sierra-type game in which the futuristic world is depicted graphically on-screen... probably very graphically indeed, as some of it is set in rather sleazy night clubs and tattoo parlours. The other characters include drug dealers, hustlers, thieves and hookers – which could give two whole new meanings to the SCORE input.

Circuit's Edge costs £29.99. Coo, what excitement.

HEY, DRAGON'S BREATH...

Sandra Sharkey's been playing *Dragon's Breath* on her Amiga and is aching to share her info. "I've worked out some useful spells to cast on dragons," she says, "which I assume are the same for other versions."

INCREASE EYESIGHT
(this also increases health and strength but reduces your speed)

2 x *RASGON*	GRIND + HEAT
2 x *IGELE*	NORMAL + HEAT
1 x *ACRUS*	MIX + HEAT

INCREASE SPEED

2 x *RASGON*	GRIND + HEAT
2 x *AROLIG*	NORMAL + HEAT
1 x *ACRUS*	MIX + HEAT

INCREASE WISDOM
(but as a side-effect reduces eyesight)

2 x *RASGON*	GRIND + HEAT
2 x *HALORUS*	CUT + CONDENSE
1 x *ACRUS*	MIX + HEAT

INCREASE STRENGTH AND HEALTH

2 x *RASGON*	GRIND + HEAT
2 x *ULIN*	MIX + HEAT
1 x *ACRUS*	GRIND + CONDENSE



CLUES-EAU

BE A ZORK

Alleuh, mah leetle Anglais beefsteaks. How time flies when you're 'aving furn! Eet is wiz a heavy heart that I merst tell you zat I cannot 'elp you wiz the clues this mernth. Mah arch enemies 'ave been stealing all les escargots from gay Paris! I tell you, eet is not now so gay! I merst find ze culpreets in ze nick of time ozzerwise I will be, 'ow you say, up sheet creek without a piece of WC papier? Anyway, zere is 'elp at 'and for you leetle ZERO adventurers. Mah secretaire Anglais, ze man wiz a spiny peeglet on his chin, 'as found a femme who will 'elp you wiz your problems until I 'ave sorted out mah ern. Until ze next time...



ADVENTURE HEALTH WARNING: Reading the following may seriously damage your adventure fun – unless you're completely crap anyway.



As you may have gathered, ZERO regrets that due to an unprecedented outbreak of snail-rustling in Paris, Inspector Clueseau has been too busy this month to compile his usual page of hints and tips. So instead we turn to that adventuress extraordinaire with the musical surname, Sue Medley, who took time off from editing *Syntax* magazine to compile a solution to Infocom's *Zork Zero*. Sue says it's worth buying a PC just to play it. The solution's pretty lengthy so we're splitting it into two parts. To avoid confusion, we'll print the first part first and then the second part second. You'll have to tune in next ish for the next instalment!



The mage doesn't suffer fools gladly, particularly if they're called Dimwit.

Ah, at last! A potion that will restore the rest of my head.



THE PROLOGUE

You start in the Banquet Hall. Follow the directions given until a man appears in smoke. "Examine man" (a mage; he curses Dimwit and his family). "Hide under table" (there's an explosion but you survive). "Stand up, get parchment" (so it appears in the main game).

THE MAIN GAME

Starting in the Great Hall. "Get calendar. Get parchment". Go to the Throne Room, "Get sceptre" (+12). "Sit on throne. Snap fingers" (hint for this given in packaging – opens an exit south +18). "Stand up. S. Get candle" (your light source for the game).

Go to Root Cellar, "Get walnut", go to Lab, "Get screwdriver" (+12). In the Entrance Hall, "Push bell"; the jester appears and says: "Some say I fly but I'm not a bird. I'm often wasted or so I've heard. Tho' I go on endlessly, there's never enough of me". "Say time" (you can now go north +20).

At some stage, the jester will play a trick on you, as he likes the odd prank. If you have problems breathing, "Remove nose". When you meet the bedbug, "Sleep". When you turn into an alligator, "Wait" till you change back. He'll also give you several items: a slate, funny paper and scroll. "Read slate"– it says to stand at the oldest and mightiest elm around and jump south thrice, west once (random directions etc). The slate looks 100 years old.

"Turn wheel" in Upper Barbican to lower drawbridge. Go to Garrison, "Open locker. Get steel key and poster" (of Ursula Flathead). Go to URS Office and the jester, dressed as a bookkeeper, asks you to think of a word with three pairs of double letters following each other. "Say bookkeeper" (he leaves a coin +6). "Get coin".

Climb the Frobozz Co HQ. "Get memo" on the 4th floor. Go to the south room on the I9th floor (hint given in

RK ZERO HERO!

packaging) and "Get T-square" (+12). Go to Magic Shop and "Get ring". Go to Post Office, "Get package. Examine it. Open it" (ceramic pigeon and perch).

Go to the door to the West Wing and open it (use steel key) +8.

Inside, play Peggleboz using the following moves: Q to G, S to Q, H to R, D to K, B to D, F to C, O to G, E to J, M to O, P to F, F to N, A to E, U to L, T to I, Q to G, E to J, I to K, L to J, O to G (a door opens north +16).

Go to Gym, "Get dumbbell" (+12). Go to Closet, "Get bag. Open it. Examine food" (for flamingos, deadly to humans). "Push button" here to remove one creature from the rebus. Go to the Basement in the Frobozz Building and "Push button". Go to Philharmonic Hall, "Stand on stand" (it goes down), "Get off stand. Get violin" (+12), "Stand on stand" to go back up.

Go down to Oubliette and "Get cap" (+12 – you get stuck in mud). The jester asks you a riddle "I look just like my brother, we both have the same father and mother, we're identical in every way, we were both born on the very same day. I'm younger by seconds but as everyone reckons, I'm not a twin and never have been". "Say triplet" (you're free from the mud).

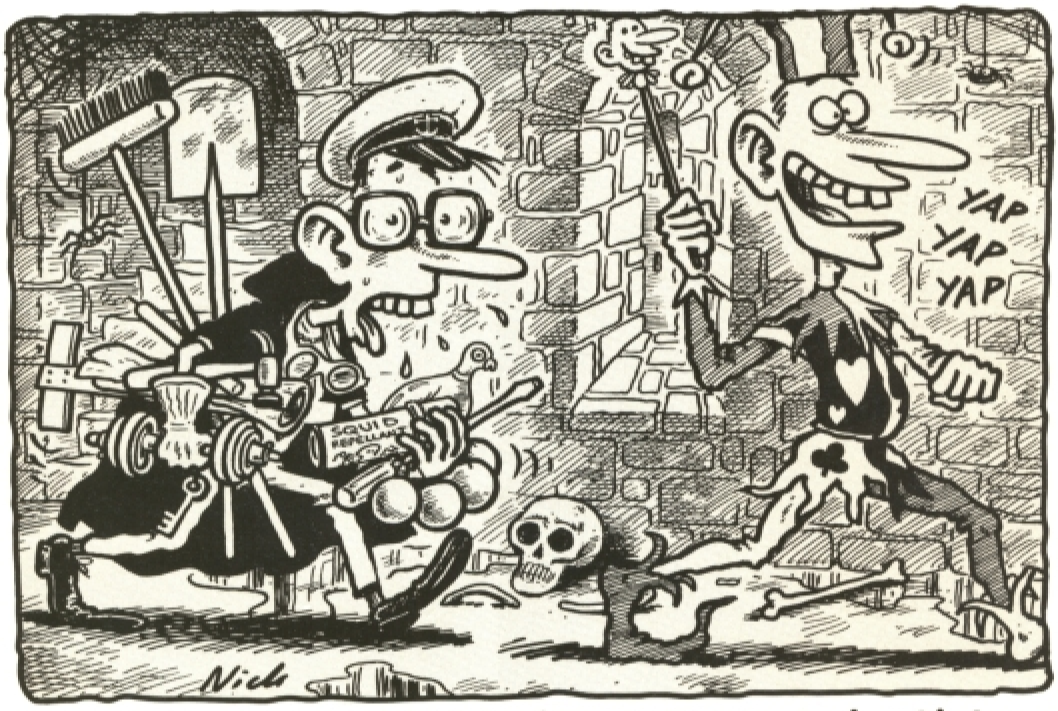
Go to the Solar and try to get the iron key. The jester says "You can find me at the beginning of youth, in the centre of an eye and at the end of eternity, what am I?". "Say Y" (+20). "Get key". Go to Magic Clothes Cupboard, "Get glove. Get cloak".

Go to Room 61 in Construction Site, "Get hammer", "Get blueprint" from Office. Go to the Casino and win at Double Fannucci (when the jester discards Trebled Fromps, play 3 Undertrumps – hint in packaging). He leaves a broom. "Get broom" (+18). Go to the Warning Room, "Read sign" (you must make sure that you pick the door leading to the Wishyfoo). Open the correct door (since the Prevaricons always lie, start by trying to pick their door and test the other two options from this: +6) and "get shovel".

Enter Inquisition, "Read sign" (if we can't grant your final wish, we'll behead you. If we can, we'll hang you), "Get box" and "Get ticket" when told to. When it's your turn, "Executioner, behead me" (an impossible command, you are thrown out +25). Outside, "Open box" (this contains a pellet of squid repellant – yum!).

Enter East Wing (use iron key to unlock door +8). "Get wand". "Read funny paper" to be told to look under a certain slab in the crypt (random). Do this to find the oracle. Read about the oracle in the Encyclopedia. To read it was said to have the power to transport believers to distant regions. The oracle has a depression.

Go to cell and "Clean cobwebs", using broom to find a flask (+12). Go to the Toll Plaza and "Put coin in basket" to get past (+14). Go down to the Orb Room and collect the four orbs. Go to the Cave-In where the jester asks you to guess his middle name. Go to the Library and "Read about jester". His name is random. Go back to the Cave-In and "Say Buck" or whatever you read (+6). You gain an anti-pit bomb. Go to the Pits and "Examine bomb. Read label. Throw bomb" (all the pits but one vanish. If you go down this pit you'll come to the ear of a giant brogmoid which is blocked with ear fungus).



What's wrong with the world these days? You can't even get a decent jester.

Go to the Pyramid Room and get the goggles. Complete the Bozbar puzzle twice, each time entering the new room that opens off the Weird Passage and collecting both the cup (+7) and the manuscript (+12).

Wear goggles and enter the Gaming Room to see the shell game. You'll see where the jester puts the bill, e.g. his pocket (random). "Point to pocket" (or wherever). He gives you the bill (+12).

Go to the yacht. "Wear cap" (so you can use the controls). Push <colour> button to go to the respective docks or to the centre of the lake. (+18 to leave dock). "Push white button" to get to the centre of the lake . Go down, drop pellet then "Enter bathysphere. Read plaque. Examine controls" (lever, light, hand-hold), "Put hand in hand-hold. Get pellet. Remove hand. Close door. Turn on light" (outside), "Lower lever" (bathysphere goes down), wait till bathysphere reaches the bottom. "Put hand in hand-hole. Drop pellet" (scares off the squid), "Get ruby" . "Raise lever" and wait till you get back to the surface, "Put hand in hand-hole. Open waldo" (ruby drops out). Remove hand. Open door. Out. Get ruby" (+25).

"Press green button" and leave yacht at green dock (it will be sunk if left at the blue dock!). Try to go west from Stream and the jester will ask a riddle – "One night four men sat down to play. They played and played till break of day. They played for money, not for fun, with separate scores for every one. And when the time had come to square accounts, they all had made quite nice amounts. What were they playing?" "Say music" and he gives you a document (+12).

Right, we'll take a short break now but we'll be back with part two of this solution in a few weeks time. Don't go away now!



Mike Gerrard's great-great grandad: The Man With The Parrot On His Head.

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"*Projectyle* is an addictive multiplayer that offers bags of frenetic fun," Scored 90. See issue nine for the full review.

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10 KICK OFF II Anco
"It's brilliant. Worth buying even if you have *Kick Off 1*." Scored 90. See the full review in issue ten.

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12 FLOOD Electronic Arts
"Guaranteed hours of cutesy, arcade adventure fun... it's floody brilliant!" Scored 90. See issue ten for the full review.

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13 RAINBOW ISLANDS Ocean
"Bleedin' ber-illiant... it's got it all (and more besides)." Scored 90. See the full review in issue seven.

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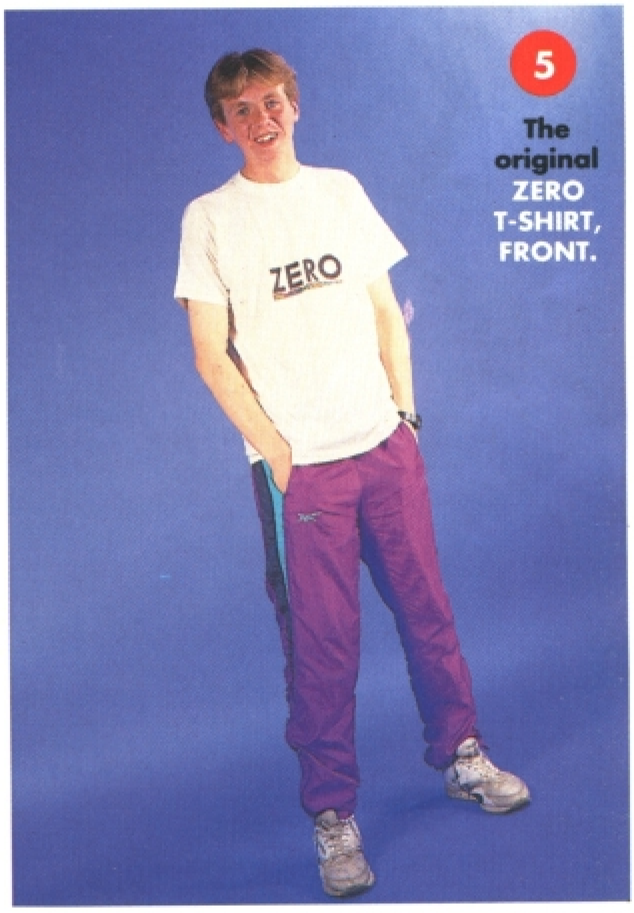




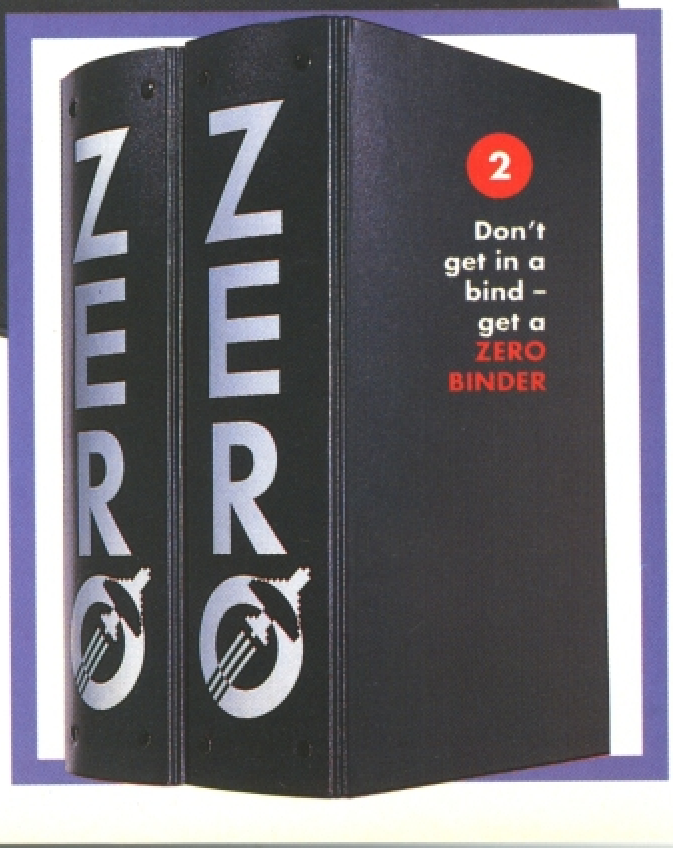
3 Cool, cotton and chic – the ZERO HERO T-SHIRT



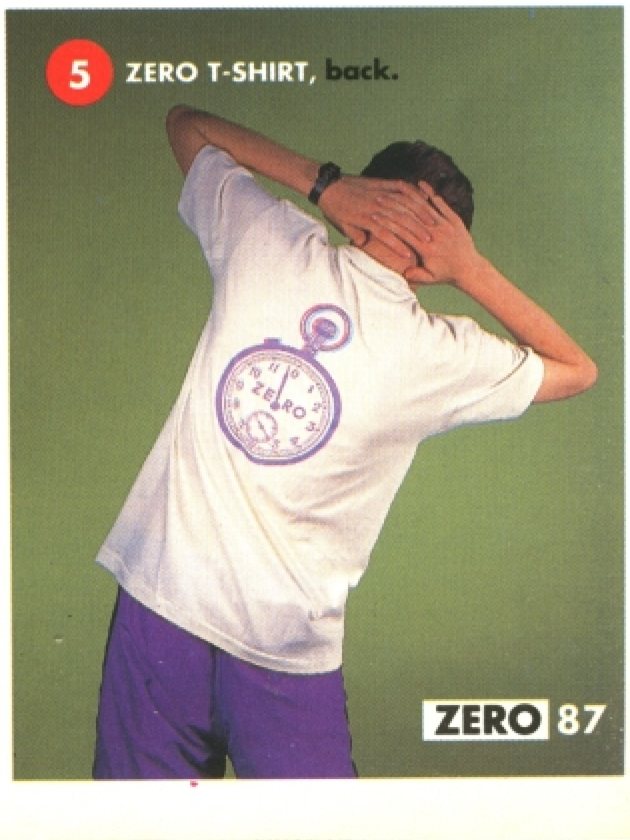
4 It's trendy and black – it's the ZERO SACK!



5 The original ZERO T-SHIRT, FRONT.



2 Don't get in a bind – get a ZERO BINDER



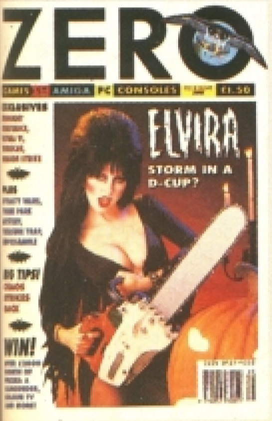
5 ZERO T-SHIRT, back.

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COMPO

ATARI'S BORN AGAIN!!

A SECOND CHANCE TO WIN SOME ATTRACTIVE ATARI PRIZES!

Here we go with your second chance to get hold of a corking new STE Discovery Pack, courtesy of those rather generous Atari people. It contains not only the latest ST, but also four top-hole software titles, a graphics package and all the other relevant bits and bobs. But wait... (there's more!) Fail to win the star prize and you could still be in the running for one of 20 copies of Jeff Minter's *Photon Storm* on Atari's games label Arc. This is a colourful arcade blasteroo that recreates the feel of early arcade classics as you whizz about, trailing radiation pods, blasting aliens and warping all over the shop. It's fab.

SIMPLISSIMO!

So what do you have to do to get hold of one of these superb prizes? Well, it couldn't be easier. Largely 'cos it's the same as last time! (Except the answers are slightly different.) The new Atari pack is called 'Discovery' and rather coincidentally, pictured here are several other discoveries and discoverers. All you need to do is match up the former with the latter. If you think for example that Einstein discovered Big Fun, then you'll jot down the number 4 next to the word 'Big Fun' on the coupon. Cinch, isn't it? In the exceedingly likely event of a tie, fill in the tie-break question in not more than one simple word. Then fill in your name, address and computer format and mail the coupon to Atari's Born (Again) Compo, PO Box 1509, Enfield, Middlesex, EN1 1LQ. STOP



(1) Pickles The Dog



(2) Stock Aitken And Waterman



(3) Captain Cook



(4) Albert Einstein

WIN AN(OTHER) ATARI DISCOVERY PACK! WIN 20 (MORE) COPIES OF ARC'S *PHOTON STORM!*



WHO DISCOVERED...?

Botany Bay ( )
Theory Of Relativity ( )
The World Cup ( )
Big Fun ( )

TIE-BREAK QUESTION:
The best 16-bit computer magazine in the world is... ____________

NAME ____________

ADDRESS ____________

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____________ **POST CODE** ____________

I own a PC ( ) an ST ( ) an Amiga ( ) a pair of jokey nylon underpants ( ) (Please tick as appropriate)

RULES

- The Editor's decision is final – and it's not STE-asy to sneak anything past him!
- Any entries 'discovered' after the closing date of August 31st 1990 will be 'packed' into the bin.
- No Employees of Dennis Publishing or Atari are allowed to enter and any found trying will be made to weather the *(Photon)* Storm of the ZERO team's wrath.

yikes!
THE READERS' PAGES

Send all your old crap to Yikes! ZERO, Dennis Publishing, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE – there might even be a rather super free 'gift' in it for you (if we feel like it).

HIGHEST JOYSTICK IN THE WORLD

It's "uppie" time again. That's right, it's the bit of the mag where boring old joysticks attain giddy new heights. Except it isn't. The records for land based height (3318 feet) and aircraft aided height (37,000 feet) still stand. But what do we have here?



Here's the enclosed letter (from Stuart Tuck of Chippenham)...

"Dear ZERO. Here's a shot of my joystick perched on the captain's hat (which is on his knee). I think the altimeter says 37,600 feet. In the may issue of ZERO you said there was a special prize for the first person to get a cockpit interior shot with pilot, joystick and altimeter. But am I the first?"

Er, no. You're not. Tough luck old fruit. And we checked that altimeter with an electron microscope (well, the bottom of a milk bottle, anyway). It says 37,000 feet, not 37,600. (What looks like a six is in fact a nought with a one immediately above it). So you've equalled the record, not broken it. Still, nice try (and you do get a badge, so stop blubbing). Anyway, as we said last month – even if you can't break the records, you can always send in pictures of joysticks in unusual places. Go on, get the old brain cells ticking over (if you have any). Think of somewhere "different". (On the balcony in the public bit overlooking the politicians in the House Of Commons. In the overnight cells at a police station. In the rhino enclosure at a zoo. On the end of Vic Reeves' man with the stick's "stick". The list must be endless.)

ALL THE HITS (AND MORE)

On the Alan P. Thorpe show (The disc jockey who's so crap that no radio station would touch him with a barge pole.)



Hiya! And welcome to the show. And have I got some musical treats for you today! Um, well actually I haven't, seeing as I haven't got a record player – not that you'd be able to hear the records even if I did have one. Hmm. It's tricky this, being a disk jockey in a magazine. What I'll have to do is announce the records I'm going to play and you can go and put them on your record players at home. (If you don't own the record I announce, pop to your nearest Oxfam shop). Let's start with a blast from the past. Urr, hang on, I can't read my writing on the playlist. Oh yes, groove down and rave to the sounds of Sadé – and *Goodbye To James*! Oh, wait, it's *Goodbye To Jane*, not James. Oh, and it's Slade, not Sadé. Right! Get down and groove to the sound of Slade and *Goodbye To James*. *(Put on Goodbye To Jane. Ed.)*

That was *Goodbye To James*, by Sadé. This is the Alan P. Thorpe show and I'm your host, er, Alan P. Thorpe. If you've just tuned in, you've already missed one great happening track – so don't go away again. Rave. Where was I? Ah yes. It's competition time. Your chance to win a Hyndburn Transport "Bus Watch" Badge. It's a great badge, with a picture of a bus on it. The first person to phone in and tell me what the capital of Sweden is wins. It's Stockholm! Eh? Oh, I've accidentally given the answer away. Never mind, I'll be doing another competition on the next show, so you can still win. Time for some more music. Groove down and r-r-r-rave to the sounds of Simon And Garfunkel. If you've got (ha ha) troubled waters in your life then here's a (ha ha) bridge to go over it! *(Put on Bridge Over Troubled Waters. Ed.)*

Yeeeee-haaaaaa! Rave it! My name's Alan P. Thorpe and this is the most monster radio show in the country. Let's move right on up and get right on down with a heavy dance track. You got the rhythm? It's time for *Misty*, the B-side of Slade's *Goodbye To James*! R-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-rave! *(Put on Goodbye To Jane. Ed.)*

Oh dear. I put on the wrong side. Never mind, it's time for a "talky bit." Unfortunately I haven't got anybody to talk to, so I'm going to have to talk to myself...

"Alan – where would you most like to go in the world, and why?"

"Um, I don't know actually Alan. Can I think about it for a bit?"

"Of course you can Alan. Let me know in the next show."

R-r-r-rave it! And now it's time for the Request Spot. Except I haven't got any requests... *(Nine minute silence after Alan accidentally pulls the microphone jack out of it's socket but doesn't realise it).*

...Rave! I bet you were wondering where I'd got to. We had a fault with the transmitter actually – hang on, what's that? Oh, it's my sandwich. Anyway, that just about wraps it up for today. Just time for one more pulsating disco track! This is Alan P. Thorpe saying F.A.B. – (F. A. "B" here again for my next show!) Ha ha! Here's some music.
(Put on Goodbye To Jane. Ed.)

Do you want Alan P. Thorpe to play your favourite tracks? Then fill in this coupon. You could win a Hyndburn Transport "Bus Watch" Badge. (If Alan hasn't lost it.)
The records I want played on the Alan P. Thorpe Show are...

(1) ____________
(2) ____________
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Name ____________
Address ____________

Cut Out And Collect Corner DANGEROUS DOGS (No.1)

THE PUG



Do not approach this dog. It is a direct descendant of the wolf.

BLACK SHAPE

The Alternative* Letters Page

Hype! It's annoying, isn't it? First we have the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles then along comes Dick Tracy. You can't even get away from it at breakfast. The other morning I tipped my cornflakes packet up and what falls into my bowl? A useless Dick Tracy rub on 'tattoo'. Then I sliced the top off my egg and what pops out? Two plastic Ninja Bloody Turtles, that's what. So, I'm not going to print *any* Dick Tracy or Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles letters. Got that?

Cher Forme Noir
Those Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, eh? And what about Dick Tracy? *(...sniiip.)*
Nick Dale
Redhill, Surrey
● *Warned you.* **Black Shape.**

Dear Black Shape
I'm just writing to say I totally agree with Edwin van de Sanden (issue eight). I also came to a stage where computer mags were becoming increasingly like text book literature, i.e. very, very boring. Then out of sheer desperation (or sheer genius) I picked up a copy of ZERO, sat down and read it. I laughed. I read it again. Oh joy, what bliss. At last, an oasis in computer literature (even though it's a tad bit sexist, but nobody's perfect and it's a relatively small price to pay for such a quality magazine). To get to the point, please, please, please don't change into a dull and boring magazine on topics like CD Rom, heavy metal or RPG. We love you just the way you are.
Anne Fletcher
Forest Hill, London
PS. Any additional information on the STE would be most appreciated.
● *Sexist?* Sexist? *What are you blithering on about girl? Publisher Teresa's a chick, Art Editor Catherine's a chick, Production Editor Amaya's a chick – even writer David McCandless is a chick.* (I'm not actually. Macca.) *The whole ZERO team is totally "right on" as regards sexual politics. The only dodgy person is Mad Dog, but fighter pilots are like that. Hey, I hope you've applied for the post of Air Hostess – after all, a plane full of chaps might be good fun for a while, but at the end of the day no-one gets a chance to join the Mile High club! Oh, and regarding the STE: Atari have cunningly designed a computer that refuses to load a hell of a lot of supposedly compatible software. Well done Atari!* **Black Shape.**

Hello Black Shape
Me again – the bloke with the broken Amiga. It should be fixed tomorrow (some hope) so I'll get back to writing you a letter. I have enclosed a bottle of lemonade for you to drink. Well, actually it's just the top, because the bottle wouldn't fit in the envelope. Oh well. What I want to know is, er, can Black Shapes, erm, have, you know – "kiddies"? Ahem.
"Ludwig" Ledbury
Wantage, Oxon
● *The lemonade top came in handy. It enabled me to finish making my "Barbie and Ken's launderette". (Yvette mucked her one up on* Blue Peter, *but my one came together perfectly.) The lemonade top was a laundry basket: after you'd punched loads of little holes in the sides. Anyway, last month you may have spotted a condom on one of my sticky out bits. My sperm count is nine. Question answered.* **Black Shape.**

Dear "Uncle" Black Shape
Firstly, don't take anything in this letter seriously. My main reason for writing is to inform you of another reason why Biggles was a shandy drinker: have you ever seen a picture of him, you know, "tackle out"? Did Captain W.E. Johns ever entitle one of his books "Biggles Gets His Todger Out"? No! Have you ever seen Biggles thrusting his pelvis in and out lustily, making "whooar" noises? No, you haven't! And I'll tell you why – it's because Biggles stood too close to the propellor of his "trusty kite" one day, the result of which was an instant "willy" amputation.

Captain W.E. Johns never wrote of the incident partly because he wanted to keep Biggles "shandyness" a secret, but mainly because he couldn't be bothered – especially when his typwriter was playing up and the 'e' was playing up.
Mark J. Cox
Gwynned, Wales
PS. Isn't this letter silly. I hate silly letters. They make me so mad – I'm going to write in and complain.
● *I'll do it for you... "I find the constant references to the male reproductive organ in your magazine ZERO totally unacceptable. I have complained to the Queen." There. Done it.* **Black Shape.**

Dear Shapey
It's true that the universe itself is run on pure logic. And it's also true that the modern computer is run on the same logic. Therefore it's true to say that the literature which studies the computer and its logic is ultimately studying the definitive structure of the very universe as we know it. ZERO – the guide to 16 bits, the universe and everything.
Andrew "Unknown Philosopher" Williams
Llandudno, Wales
● *Gawd, the the vastness and smallness of it all. The macrocosm and the microcosm. Yin and Yang. The cyclic throbbing spiral of time. The uppies and downies and the innies and outies of the multi-dimensional structure of space. The further and bigger you get, the nearer and smaller you become! Paradox upon paradox upon paradox. But ZERO, over the next 12 issues, will begin to unravel them all and prove that the search for a unified theory in quantum mechanics is in fact pointless. Why search for a needle in a haystack when in fact the needle is the haystack? Blimey, all this thought is making me go incredibly dizzy. Let's get back to willies again.* **Black Shape.**

Dear Black Shape
Fairly recently it has been my birthday. In fact it was in the merry month of May. And what did I get from my budding chums? A rubber chicken. A rubber bloody chicken. What, may I ask, can you do with a rubber bloody chicken?
Glynn Downing
Cowplain, Portsmouth
● *You could melt it down and turn it into a rubber willy.* **Black Shape.**

Dear Black Shape
Having seen the attempts of Michael Tipping to liven up waiting for your meals to arrive in restaurants, I present my own game which serves the same purpose. It's called "Bock". What you need is a table with lots of things on it that can be moved about (salt, pepper, sugar, napkin holders etc). You and another person move the things about as if you're playing a game and you occasionally say "Bock!" (hence the name of the game). It may sound silly, but it works. I have even had the person sitting behind me tap me on the shoulder to offer some tactical advice.
Dougie Hare
Cleethorpes, Humberside
● *I tried it out and it went horribly wrong – I'd accidentally picked a table next to a visiting team of drunken Australian Rules Football players. "Bock!" I yelled, slamming a napkin holder down next to the pepper grinder. "Do you want a smack in the teeth?" asked the captain of the footie team. "Bock!" I laughed, moving the salt cruet two 'squares' to the left. I don't remember anything after that.* **Black Shape.**

*i.e. crap

MAD DOG FIGHTER ACE

My word! Everybody wants to join Mad Dog Airways! I had so many applicants that I didn't know what to do with them. So I pootled over to my bank, demanded to see the manager and put the problem to him. "Well, you've got a lot of potential staff, but only one plane," he said.



"Exactly," I replied. "So how about stumping up a few grand. I know where I can pick up some Dakotas cheap." But then the cad noticed something. "These job applications," he said, rifling through them for the third time, "there are plenty for the posts of co-pilot, navigator and rear gunner – but I see that you don't have any pretty air hostesses. You can't run an airline without pretty air hostesses, you know." I had to concur. He had the proof in his hands. If I'd said that I'd left the hostess applications at home he'd only have asked to see them at a later date. So there you have it. I'm stumped at third base. And who's to blame? You girls, that's who. All the chaps have done their bit. I'm an equal opportunities employer – I'm not saying "The chaps can go on the mission but the babes have to work in a munitions factory," am I? No, I'm not. I'm saying "We're all in this together." Oh well. Some of you chaps are going to have to dress up as women and have your photo taken instead. Sorry, I know it may be embarrassing on the way to the photo booth, but it's the only way we're going to see some action. The first four applicants are *guaranteed* to be included in the crew. Anyone who doesn't get included in the flight crew will be on board as a passenger. And don't forget, any survivors are going to be winning software prizes. Full passenger and crew lists next month, but for now here's a map of the first jaunt! (With expected trouble spots highlighted.)

APPLICATION FORM

I want to be considered for the post of Air Hostess on Mad Dog Airlines.
I have enclosed a photo.

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Okay, hold the palms of your hands out. Swiiisshhh! (Sound of painful stinging sound as fast moving cane makes contact with flesh). There! That's what you get for being useless. No Claims To Fame this month, because none of you sent any in. You can't have dried up already, can you? It doesn't even matter if it's a total crap celebrity (Alison Holloway for instance). We're not expecting anybody to be able to match that one of Jimmy Saville a few issues back, but surely you can find something. Anything at all... Lesley Judd? Peter Pervis? Heather Couper? After all, you'll get your photo back* and win yourself a spanky little prize into the bargain. And, of course, need we add that you yourself gain a tiny bit of fame by being in the mag. You know Andy Warhol said that everybody would be famous for 15 minutes? Well, you could do even better than that. Imagine the scene: a dentist's surgery with one mag lying on the table. It's a copy of ZERO and it's open at the Yikes! pages. And on those pages a picture of *you* standing next to, say, Jocky Wilson. Everybody who passed through the waiting room that day would have seen it. If it was a particularly busy day, you would have been famous for anything up to 30 minutes. And if it happened every day of the year – well, you know what we're saying... send in those pictures! Now!

ON THE RUN

with ROBERT McALPINE JUNIOR

Monday July 18th, 1990

Hello builders. I'm afraid that due to certain "hitches" my regular column dealing with advice on the construction and demolition industry has had to be curtailed. Basically I've got far more pressing matters to deal with, such as trying to get out of the country. After last month's brush with the Hendon constabulary I find myself saddled with the dubious distinction of being the eighth most wanted man in Britain. So I'm off to Burma. The trouble is that passport control at all the main airports will have been given my details, so I can't risk the traditional method of leaving the country by plane. But that doesn't matter – I have a plan. As my old Gran used to say, "Robert lad, if tha canna gow oop, 'appen tha can always gow doon." And she was right. I'm going to tunnel my way to France. The absolutely brilliant thing is that a tunnel has actually been started for me – I'm referring, of course, to the Channel Tunnel. And (as regular readers will know) there's actually a job waiting for me! Plus the people in charge don't care about my criminal status. I'll write again when I get there.

Thursday 4th August, 1990

Hello builders. I'm 'on site' again! It's a great feeling. I've got my wellies, my donkey jacket and my regulation yellow plastic hat. And what's more I'm in charge. Instant promotion to the top. I've done away with the giant tunnelling drill and have kitted the entire workforce out with spoons (very tough spoons, with handles that Uri Geller couldn't bend even if he used an oxy-acetalene torch). I've introduced a shares incentive scheme amongst the labourers and upped the overtime rates. We've got an intensive 24 hour operation going, and we're getting through 950 metres of bedrock every week. Also, (unbeknownst to anyone but myself) I've been altering the route of the tunnel southwards by half a degree every four days. As far as the Frenchies are concerned, both sides are going to meet up somewhere in the middle of the Straights Of Dover in a couple of years time. They're going to be in for a surprise. If all goes according to plan, our side of the tunnel should be surfacing somewhere near Cayeux-Sur-Mer by the end of September. No passport control and no chance of being bagged by Interpol. It's all rather exciting really. Anyway, I really must go now as I've got a double shift change to co-ordinate. Happy building!

*probably

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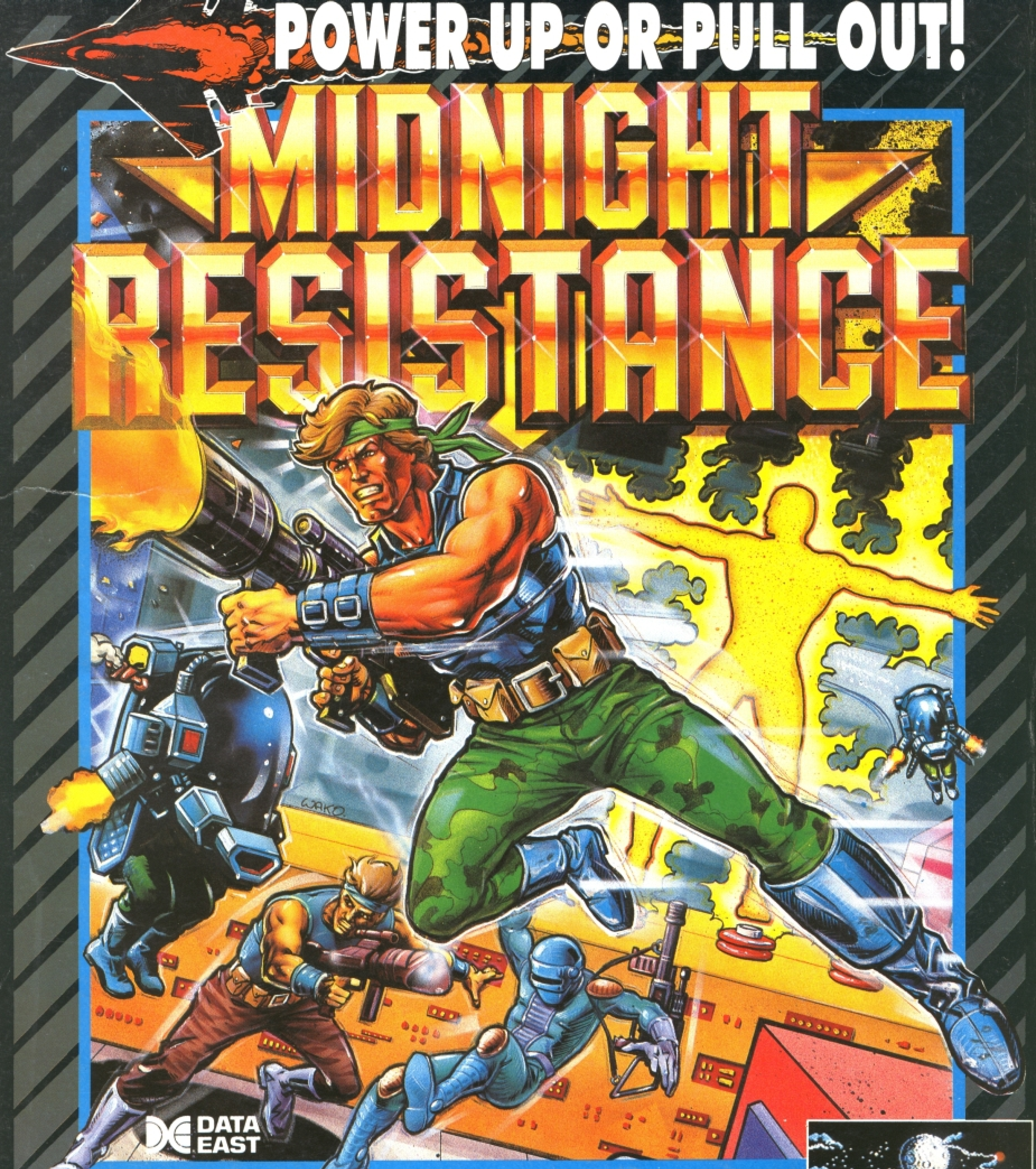
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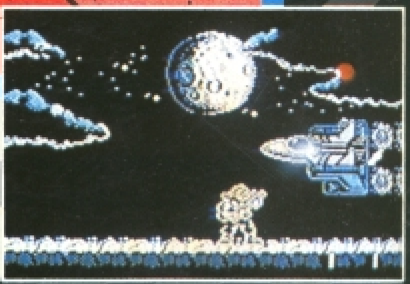


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